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THE WAYS OF JANE

by

MARY FINLEY LEONARD

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THE WAYS OF JANE

THE WAYS OF JANE

A Story with which the Wise and Prudent Have No Concern

BY

MARY FINLEY LEONARD
AUTHOR OF "THE LITTLE RED CHIMNEY"

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THE WAYS OF JANE

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CHAPTER I

OUR STREET

"Our" street, as Jane always calls Sycamore Street, begins down in the business world. Trust companies, brokers' offices, a modest stock exchange mark its first stage, then come the Court House and the City Hall in a park-like enclosure whose green grass and scarlet geraniums, assisted by a spiritless fountain brighten the path to the tax office.

In one of Jane's story books, still treasured, some verses beginning:

"Within this wood do ogres dwell,"

exactly voiced Miss Goldie's sentiments in regard to this section of the town, so mysterious and baffling seemed to her its processes, so freighted with disaster to the simple

Jane held that where there were ogres there were sure to be fairies, and, indeed, the rhyme goes on to state that

"Fairies here abide as well;"

but Miss Goldie doubted its further application.

Susie Merrifield, who had just finished her course in a business college, and was employed in the advertising department of a big corporation, was in part responsible for Miss Goldie's opinion of the business world. Thus far she hadn't found any fairies.

From the City Hall a fifteen minutes' walk through a dreary, colorless district brought you, in the days when this story begins, to the old church, where it is necessary to pause because Angela and Jane lived next door, in a tall soot-stained house with a magnolia tree in the front yard. Next to this was the basement cottage of the Blind Man, and across the street was St. Anne's Hospital with a marble statue of her over the door, and gentle-faced sisters going in and out. A little farther along was the boarding house kept by Susie Merrifield's aunt, Mrs. Marple, and her sister-in-law Miss Percy.

An old neighborhood, its houses were growing gray and infirm. Tall, gaunt sycamores shaded the brick-paved sidewalks, and elaborate rusty iron fences inclosed the front yards. The old church stood on the corner, unused and desolate, casting long shadows. The Virginia creeper did its best to hide the dilapidation, twining about the Corinthian pillars from which the plaster was slowly breaking away, reaching out across the cracked window panes, covering as if for very shame the words cut in the corner stone. "My House," was all that could be made out now. It seemed to leave the question of ownership open, and served oddly enough to strengthen Jane's conviction that it belonged to her.

In the churchyard the grass grew rank, and last year leaves lay heaped in the fence corners where the wind had driven them. Jane would have told you about the violets that bloomed here in the spring, and called your attention to the locust tree that had come up of itself in a sheltered angle near the porch. For much longer than Jane could remember, it had had undisturbed possession and was now a fine feathery tree. Possibly she would have told you—though she did not tell everybody—of the fairy who lived in the tip-top

of it, and would have pointed out to you those strange creatures, the Cock and the Horse, disporting themselves on opposite gables of St. Anne's, who might be described as the presiding geniuses of the neighborhood.

A mile or more from the old church, Sycamore Street takes a turn literally, makes as it were a sweeping courtesy, and as by the wand of a fairy godmother becomes Kenton Place.

Sycamore Street knew and rejoiced in Kenton Place, but at this time Kenton Place was for the most part oblivious of Sycamore Street. It was in the deed when you bought a lot and built a house in Kenton Place that you would forget there was such a region as Sycamore Street, that is to say socially. Of course, you might cut your coupons and cash your checks at the Trust Company, but in other words, you must become an Aloofer, and if holding aloof did not come natural to you, you must practice it.

In Kenton Place there was a white stone church with a graceful spire, which was largely attended by Aloofers, who listened with great approval to the sermons of the eloquent and magnetic Dr. Brewer.

Next to the church, standing in the midst of a wonderful garden, was the Kings' pal-

ace, as it was often called, and in this palace lived a princess—that is, she was there sometimes, and Jane and Miss Goldie called her a princess because so far as looks went she was the very ideal of one, and, besides, it was a little joke. Hers was a most gentle and exquisite aloofness. She did not have to practice, she was mistress of the art. Jane and Miss Goldie loved her better than anybody they saw driving in the park.

Everything about Kenton Place was splendid, indeed, but Sycamore Street had one advantage, Angela lived there, and not even the princess could vie with her, except in the matter of gowns.

Angela had little time for the fol-de-rols of youth, as the Blind Man called them, she was so busy making things go, taking care of poor grandfather, deciding what to have for dinner, buttoning Jane's frocks and doing books.

Miss Goldie, who for a simple person was quite shrewd at comparisons, said Angela was like a white magnolia, and certainly there was a quality in her beauty better described by those firm, creamy blooms than anything else you could think of. Now the princess might, as a matter of course, have been likened to an orchid, and Susie Merrifield to a cornflower.

Miss Goldie was a little wisp of a person, so lacking in color and definite line you hardly knew she was there unless your attention was especially called to her. There was a wistful look in her eyes, perhaps, because she would have liked to stay a little girl, and couldn't quite. She seemed afraid of grown persons, and only half at home in the grown-up world.

Jane never tired of hearing the story of how Angela and Miss Goldie found each other. They were both called on to relate it over and over again. Putting the two versions together this is the gist of it:

It was at the green grocers' one Saturday morning. Miss Goldie wanted a box of matches and none of the busy clerks paid the least attention to her. Feeling rather hurt and embarrassed, she was about to leave, when her attention was attracted to a young woman at the butcher's stall. She was so business-like and capable, and withal so pleasant to look at, that Miss Goldie lingered to watch her.

She didn't realize she was staring, but Angela insists she must have been—so hard she felt it, though her back was turned. At any rate, something caused her to look over her shoulder and to wonder why the timid little person seemed familiar, and then sud-

denly Miss Goldie was greatly alarmed to hear herself addressed.

"I beg your pardon but aren't you Miss Goldie Deane?"

Miss Goldie shrank into her shell, then emerged far enough to acknowledge she was the person mentioned.

"Then don't you remember Angela?—Angela and Ellie Hearn?"

Too surprised to be afraid now, Miss Goldie faltered, "You don't mean—it can't be——" for to her these names were associated with yellow braids and short frocks.

"Oh, yes it can, Miss Goldie! It is Angela. Where have you been all this time? Ellie and I used to love to go to your house. Have you still got the big doll?"

Angela's words and the touch of her hand quite overcame Miss Goldie, they brought back the past so vividly.

"You moved away, you and your mother, I think," Angela went on.

"Yes, to Illinois. Mother died there, and my brother, and now we have come back, my sister-in-law and I." In this brief statement Miss Goldie exhausted the history of ten or fifteen years. "And Ellie?" she asked.

"Ellie died seven years ago," Angela told her.

Miss Goldie sighed, so many people were dead it seemed, but Angela added brightly a moment later, "You must know Jane, Miss Goldie, she's the dearest thing going."

At this point Jane invariably gave a bounce of delight and concluded the story to suit herself. "And so we went to see you, didn't we? And I told you about the Cock and the Horse and the fairy, and after that everything was different."

This last was Miss Goldie's own phrase. Truly everything was different, for in Jane's company she rediscovered that land of many names where the impossible happens, and you can always find the companionship you crave. In truth she hadn't traveled so very far away from it and could easily get back.

The Wise and Prudent are prone to scoff at this land, to characterize it as a poor place, one reason for this being that though there are many roads leading to it you can't travel in a trolley car or cab or an automobile, but must go on your own legs, unless you know how to fly, and there are no through tickets to be had at any office. The Wise and Prudent like to know exactly where they are going, and they prefer to ride because, they say, it saves shoe leather.

Jane held to her convictions with a joyous courage no criticism could quench, and cared not a jot what the Wise and Prudent might say, but Miss Goldie stood in awe of them, and when she heard them exclaim "Nonsense! this is going too far," or, "Do you think life so simple as that?" or some of the other things they say so often, it depressed her, and Jane had to cheer her up.

Queerly enough the excursions taken by Jane and Miss Goldie had a close connection with buttonholes. Jane had not yet decided whether she would devote herself to buttonholes or books, these being the two industries with which she was most familiar.

Everybody knows that of the making of books there is no end—the statement is found in the Bible—or, if, like the Blind Man, you cannot accept anything unverified by your own experience, you have but to observe the book sellers' windows and the publishers' lists to be convinced. As to buttonholes, however it may have been in Solomon's time, it would seem that the making of them at the present day is quite as endless.

Buttonholes were Miss Goldie's specialty. She couldn't do books, though not without opinions concerning them, but Angela, who,

did them by the dozen, could on occasion make buttonholes.

Doing books involved an intent little frown and a frequent, "Jane, darling, please don't bother. I must get these done tonight." Jane thought it fun to see the office boy coming in with a bag full of fresh ones, to help him pile them on the table, viewing them meanwhile with a critical eye. Her taste and Angela's rarely agreed. It seemed Angela was hard to please, but once in a while she would exclaim, "Jane, darling, here is a lovely story with real people in it," and the little frown would disappear and the smile Jane loved would shine in her eyes as well as upon her lips. Then Jane would say, "Tell me about it, please, Angela."

Sometimes Jane helped. With a fat blue pencil she made large Rs on the outside covers, which showed they were ready for the office boy to take back again. Miss Goldie supposed this R meant "Read," and seemed sorely puzzled when Angela said not necessarily, that it stood for "Reviewed," a different matter. The Blind Man who overheard, added that it had various meanings, such as "Roasted" or "Riddled," but one paid little attention to him.

Buttonholes were far less absorbing than

books, they left the fancy free to wander. Furthermore, they linked you to the world of Aloofers which was interesting. Miss Goldie did finishing for Madame Berry, whose lingerie waists and gowns had a more than local fame. Sometimes when she and Jane went to the park and sat on a bench near the driveway, they would see in a passing carriage the very person the buttonholes then in process of making, were for. How little did this fine lady dream she was driving past her own buttonholes!

Mrs. Deane, Miss Goldie's sister-in-law, was heard to say, that for her part she didn't take care of other people's children for nothing, if Goldie chose to, all well and good. Mrs. Deane did not understand; she couldn't, so it is useless to blame her.

There were others who noticed that Miss Goldie's face lost something of its wistfulness after she became friends with Angela and Jane. Once when the Blind Man quoted in her presence, "And what is friendship but a name?" she surprised him by asserting that it was a great deal more, which was brave of her for anyone could see she was dreadfully afraid of the Blind Man.

There was nothing wrong with the Blind

Man's eyes, by the way—nothing, that is, beyond the natural infirmity of years. It was simply another little joke suggested by his favorite exclamation. Some people are blind because they don't see, while others don't see because they are blind. There is a difference.

In the early days of their acquaintance, Miss Goldie often regarded Jane with a thoughtful, puzzled look. It was strange enough to find, as in the case of Angela, the little girl transformed into the woman, but this was as nothing to finding in the place of one little girl another, like her, yet not like her.

In reality, no one could have been less suggestive of mystery than Jane, although she did not lend herself to description or even comparison. You must think of a number of things to get a clear idea of her—of springtime and violets, of daisies on a hillside when the wind blows, of dancing brooks and singing birds, and brilliant butterflies, and then of the dearest child you know. That is Jane.

Yet, although this was the general opinion, there was another point of view. For instance, the Blind Man's wife, passing one afternoon, stopped to commiserate Angela on the care of a growing child.

"But I shouldn't want one who wasn't

growing," Angela replied. "Though it is a bother letting down hems;" and turning to the small person who swung on the gate she demanded, "Jane, darling, what would I do without you?—without someone to love and to let down hems for?"

Jane was inclined to enlarge upon the impossibility of doing without her, being thoroughly convinced of her own importance. Who would help Angela take care of poor grandfather when Ben had his afternoon out? —or *R* the books?

Ah! grandfather, true enough. Who but Jane ever succeeded in bringing back for a moment the light to those sad eyes, something like a smile to the pale lips.

"Yes, indeed, you are worth all the bother of the hems, my precious!" Angela laughed, but there was the least quiver in her voice.

Ben was just then wheeling his master in from the side yard, grown chill beneath the shadow of the church. At sight of them Jane jumped down from the gate and ran to get the violets she had gathered in the churchyard and left on the doorstep. Then she and Angela, hand in hand, followed them into the house.

CHAPTER II

THE WEATHER VANES AND THE FAIRY

THERE was something queer about the church corner; even the Blind Man who disputed pretty much everything, acknowledged it, advancing, however, some stupid theory about air currents.

Angela was the first to suggest that the Cock and the Horse might have something to do with it. Her forte was illuminating suggestions at moments when you could have sworn she wasn't listening.

Jane said it was the fairy, and Miss Goldie agreed to pretend it was, her conscience which was the most grown up thing about her not permitting her to go further. But as we are so often told, one downward step leads to another, and the next minute she was helping to evolve a conspiracy between the fairy and the Cock and the Horse.

It was not possible to live in this neighborhood without coming to some extent under the influence of these curious creatures. Like the Blind Man's wife, you might regard them simply as two weather vanes and nothing more, or like Angela see them as types of two eternally conflicting temperaments, but you fell into the way of consulting them daily.

That, of the two, the Cock would be the one to soar, seemed the natural supposition, but no, it was the Horse who spurned the earth, galloping joyously in the face of whatever wind might blow, upheld by some eternal principle in the shape of a slender iron rod, while the Cock stood sturdily upon two feet (if he had wings he never used them), as one who rested upon fact and fact alone. The Cock never anticipated fair weather, but in fatalistic unconcern accepted things as they were. The Horse, on the contrary, betrayed a distinctly optimistic leaning. In settled weather, of course, they agreed. It takes times of doubt and danger to show up one's true character.

That the Horse liked a joke, you could see at a glance, nor was the Cock without a sort of grim humor, so Angela's theory was not without foundation. If you had taken dinner

at Mrs. Marple's on a certain evening you would have been convinced.

Pretty much all the neighborhood appeared at her table at one time or another, and on this occasion Angela and Jane were there because Laurine was having her holiday, and the Blind Man and his wife because their cook had taken French leave.

Jane, still as a mouse between Angela and Mrs. Marple, wished very much to know the meaning of this strange expression but from motives of prudence refrained from asking. Her bright eyes traveled back and forth the length of the table, and little that was said escaped her sharp ears. Just opposite was Susie Merrifield who was almost as quiet as Jane herself, seeming content to feast her eyes on Angela.

The dinner table at Mrs. Marple's was a clearing house of information on all sorts of topics, from the most recent theories of education to the latest fad of the Aloofers, not to mention current events in the neighborhood. Mrs. Browne, the Blind Man's wife, complained that there was too much gossip for her taste, but she was inclined to fault finding. It is not always easy to draw the line between an interest in our neighbors' affairs that marks

us warmly human and the eager pursuit and retailing of idle hearsay, but no doubt the comments upon Miss Lucia King were superfluous. What had these inhabitants of another world to do with the price of her gowns, the breaking of her engagement to a titled foreigner, or her portrait by a famous French artist?

For this sort of thing Miss Percy was largely responsible. She was on intimate terms with Madame Berry, who occasionally sewed for Miss King. Miss Percy had red gold hair, a stylish figure and a vivacious manner. Jane liked to watch her. It was well known that Mr. Samm, a small, dark man with very little chin, who sat next to Susie, was her devoted slave, and Miss Percy herself was responsible for the general impression that she would take him eventually if nothing better offered. Mrs. Marple said Mr. Samm was a good man, chin or no chin. Angela called him the Clipping Bureau, because he was constantly bringing out gems of verse, cut from the daily papers, and carried in a worn leather case in his breast pocket.

Somebody's innocent remark upon the unsettled weather started the discussion about the Cock and the Horse. The Blind Man, who

pinned his faith to the Cock, had taken his umbrella when he set out on his daily pilgrimage to the library that morning. Mrs. Marple, who relied on the Horse, left hers at home. As a result the lady was caught in a shower, greatly to the detriment of her bonnet and veil, and, the shower having passed long before he turned homewards, the Blind Man left his to test the honesty of the reading public.

Mrs. Browne was considerably annoyed. It was the third in two months, she complained. Mrs. Marple, peering anxiously around the coffee urn to make sure everyone was served, tried to be encouraging. She had once left hers on the street car and afterwards found it at the car barn, hence her confidence in the recovery of umbrellas was large. She was certain Mr. Browne would find his. Percy had pressed out her veil, she added, and it looked real well. Mrs. Marple acknowledged that in this world afflictions were inevitable, but held you always got through somehow, and, anyway, it would be all right when you got to heaven.

The Blind Man's wife rejected such comfort haughtily; the hope of heaven was to her no consolation for a lost umbrella. Her views of life were not broad. Unlike Mrs. Marple,

upon whom the struggle for existence had considerably worn, Mrs. Browne was plump and comfortably well-to-do; she was also the pink of neatness, while Mrs. Marple, alas! had always the air of having hooked up in a hurry.

The Blind Man himself continued to eat his dinner in sarcastic silence, after remarking that he couldn't see any sense in all this fuss about an umbrella.

Mrs. Marple went on to relate how Brother Barton had had some notes for next Sunday's sermon blown out of his hand and into the church yard.

"No great loss I venture to say," Mrs. Browne observed ungraciously.

"Well, I don't know," replied Mrs. Marple, mildly. "Brother Barton is an excellent preacher for those who like the old-fashioned Gospel."

Mr. Samm seconded her, remarking he was, indeed, an able man.

"He's preaching a series of sermons to parents, and those notes represented some deep thoughts I expect. He couldn't get into the church yard to pick them up, and he said they were blown in every direction," Mrs. Marple continued.

The Blind Man chuckled, probably at the idea of Brother Barton's deep thoughts blowing around the church yard, but no one noticed him, for Miss Percy had another occurrence to relate. She had seen the hat worn by a dignified, elderly gentleman, lifted from his head by the freakish wind and carried into this same church yard. "My goodness! but you should have seen how mad he was when he found the gate locked," she exclaimed.

Someone wished to know how he finally got it, but Miss Percy's story proved to be without satisfactory conclusion, for at the critical moment she had been called to the telephone, and when she returned to the window both the man and his hat had disappeared.

It was here that Jane, forgetting possible consequences, endeavored to make herself heard. "I know how he got it," she announced loudly, but everybody was laughing at some remark of the Blind Man. A second attempt was met with a stern, "Eat your dinner, Jane, and don't try to talk. Remember what I told you."

It is one of the hardest things in life to have a good story to tell, and be denied an audience. Jane's lip quivered. And yet it would be harder still to have to stay at home

with grandfather and Ben, and Angela usually meant what she said.

"Never mind," said Susie across the table, "you can tell me after a while."

And if misery wanted company, there was Mr. Samm trying to call attention to some verses on Spring, and Miss Percy ruthlessly snubbing him.

Susie walked home with them, and Miss Goldie was waiting in the library, so Jane had an audience after all for what turned out to be really an interesting story.

It seemed she had been watching Mufti, her cat, hunting sparrows in the church yard when it happened. The man whose hat was blown off reminded her of the king in her fairy book, though he was not wearing his robes of state. In an aloof and kingly way he appeared interested in the neighborhood, and particularly in the church, the better to survey which he had adjusted his glasses, afterwards making some notes in a small book. He was contemplating what he had written with pursed lips as if it presented some problem, when the frolicsome wind swooped down and tweaked off his hat, carrying it over the fence. At this he seemed greatly astonished and offended. Jane laughed and came out

from behind the rose bush. It is funny to see somebody else's hat blown off.

The kingly gentleman glanced up and down the street to see if anyone was observing, but Sycamore Street was for the time deserted. With a commanding air he tried the gate, but it yielded not at all to the pressure of his person. It was locked. Again he looked up and down the street, this time for assistance, his face grown very red, his brows drawn together in a tremendous frown, and said something under his breath. The hat, meanwhile, lay rakishly on its side, with the air of enjoying its freedom. Matters looked hopeless, for the fence was too high for a person of such kingly proportions to think of attempting it, when his eyes fell upon Jane.

"See here, little girl!" he called.

With great deliberation Jane advanced.

"I have lost my hat," he said, pointing to the church yard, "and for some reason this gate is locked. Now suppose you let me lift you over the fence so you can get it for me."

Certainly this showed him to be a resourceful person as well as a kingly. "Perhaps I can find something in my pocket a little girl would like," he added, seductively.

Jane saw no reason for refusing. It was

rather an adventure, and she liked adventures. She walked out of her own gate to the sidewalk, and with promptness and despatch the hat was rescued.

"That's a nice girl," the gentleman said, restoring it to his head, "now let's see what we have in our pocket."

"Are you a king?" Jane inquired.

He laughed and seemed not at all offended. "Well," he said, "I am and I am not. We do not have kings in America, my dear."

As he spoke he produced a handful of coins which he sorted with his left forefinger, holding out after a little hesitation, a quarter.

Jane was disappointed. If only it had been chocolate drops! She put her hands behind her and shook her head. It was one of Angela's rules never, never to take money from anyone, especially for doing a kindness. "If you need money very much I will give it to you," she had told her.

"Why—why—take it, little girl," the kingly gentleman urged, plainly embarrassed by her refusal.

"No, I thank you," Jane repeated, "Angela won't let me."

"That's too bad. And there aren't any stores near, where I could buy you something.

You are sure now you won't take the quarter?"

Jane was sure. It seemed strange to her that he hadn't an apple or something beside money in his pocket.

"I venture to say," the gentleman remarked as he put back the coins, "that you were never in this church yard before."

"Yes, I have been," Jane answered, "ever so many times. There's a hole in our back fence."

"You don't say so! Well, it is a dreary old place and will have to be torn down one of these days."

Jane disliked his tone. "They sha'n't tear it down," she asserted. "It's my church."

"Yours? Ha! Ha! No, indeed, it isn't anybody's church now."

There before them was the corner stone with "My House" showing plainly beneath the ivy. Jane pointed to it. "Yes, it is," she insisted, "it's mine—mine and God's."

"Oh, what a Jane you are!" Angela exclaimed, hugging her, for Jane was sitting in her lap as she told her story; and Miss Goldie wanted to know what the gentleman said to that?

"Oh, he said I was a queer midget and

what was my name, but I ran away and didn't tell him," said Jane in conclusion.

The next morning Ben brought in some soiled and crumpled papers which he had picked up by the church fence. He knew the look of manuscript and thought they might belong to his mistress.

There had been a shower in the night and the writing was almost illegible. Angela was about to drop them in the waste basket when she exclaimed, "Why, here is something about Santa Claus, Jane!"

Jane, of course, pricked up her ears at this, only to be disappointed when Angela read, "'Shall our children be taught to believe in Santa Claus and other kindred myths?'" and added, "Brother Barton's sermon, as sure as you're alive! What shall I do with it—send it back to him?"

"It looks pretty horrid, Angela, I think I'd throw it away," Jane advised, and after a moment's consideration Angela did, and no doubt if they had been listening they would have heard the fairy chuckling in the locust tree not far from their window.

And now for one more thing was the uncertain weather responsible.

It seemed to have cleared that afternoon.

The sun was out, and when Miss Goldie consulted them, the Cock and the Horse were for the moment united in a hopeful view of things, so she and Jane decided to go visiting. It may be added that Angela encouraged them to go.

While they were on the street car, however, it clouded over and began to sprinkle, and in this way it came about that Jane going softly into the library in search of Mufti, had a surprise. She had come in through the kitchen where Laurine was scrubbing, and was certain Miss Angela had gone to the office. It was one of grandfather's bad days, and Ben was taking care of him. Mufti was the only chance for diversion the situation seemed to offer.

Two persons sat on the leather sofa under Aunt Jane's portrait, so absorbed in one another they neither saw nor heard the small Jane. One of them was Angela, and she looked—oh, lovely! A soft flush was on her cheek, the bright waves of her hair seemed, somehow, to have escaped from the stern bondage of everyday. She had on what was known to Jane as her *pretty* dress, and on her face was a look by no means unfamiliar, the look she wore, for instance, when she said:

"Now, Jane darling, if you will just be patient for half an hour——"

She was saying something very like this to the person beside her, "You must go. We can be patient a little longer—and then——"

Her companion didn't wait for her to finish, but interrupted with, "And then—Angela!"

If Jane had been older she would have said, "I beg your pardon," and retreated, but with the confidence of seven years, she advanced instead. The situation demanded investigation. Who was this stranger who was treading so confidently upon her own preserves?

Angela looked at her with eyes that seemed not to see her, as Jane ran to her side, crowding into a very small space between the sofa and bookcase, and seizing her hand, from which stronghold she regarded the interloper sternly.

"Why, I thought you were with Miss Goldie," Angela said, coming to herself, then she added, turning to the stranger, "this is Jane."

"So I supposed," he replied, holding out his hand, "I'm glad to meet you, Jane."

Angela, urging her forward, placed Jane's hand in his.

Her reluctance began to melt with her first look into those gray eyes. Gray is such a good color for eyes. The kindest eyes in the world they seemed, with something back of their friendliness that would be sure to make good all they promised. A smile crept into Jane's face, and the next minute she had surrendered. Two more found her smiling at Angela from the stranger's knee, nestled comfortably against a broad chest, encircled by a strong arm. Now she remembered that explanations were in order.

"It's raining," she said, "and who would have thought it? The Cock said 'South' and the Horse said 'West,' so Miss Goldie didn't take an umbrella, even."

The stranger laughed and his eyes met Angela's. "My old friends?" he asked.

She nodded, smiling, and Jane wondered what this could mean—and oh! she was sure he wanted to hear about the fairy and the giant's tomb, and all the other things which made life so thrilling to her and Miss Goldie. She opened her mouth very wide, and began—"And"—as we do when we have a great deal to tell. But alas! Angela interrupted.

"Jane, darling, I want you to go to Laurine for a while."

This was hard. Jane looked appealingly at her new friend. Would he protest? He did not. A good deal hurt she slipped down. "I'll go," she said, "but Laurine doesn't want me, either. She's scrubbing. I guess I can take Mufti, can't I?"

The unwilling Maltese, ruthlessly wakened from his slumber on the hearth rug, seemed chiefly a collection of legs and tail as Jane gathered him into her arms. Angela laughed and kissed her, explaining that they had things to talk about that would not interest a little girl. People are always so sure about what won't interest little girls.

"I'll see you before I go, Jane," the visitor said, holding the door for her as if she had been a young lady.

She sat on the stairs that swept upward in a broad curve past a trellis with grape vines growing over it, and struggled with Mufti, who wasn't in a companionable mood, but extremely sullen and disagreeable in his determination to escape at the first opportunity. Jane presently gave up the fight, and gathered grapes from the wall—the very same grapes that Angela and Ellie had gathered when they were little girls, and played taking them to poor grandfather. He was asleep

under Ben's care, so Jane went to the kitchen and begged a cooky, after which she sat on the stairs again for ever and ever so long before the library door opened.

"Have you been here all this time, Jane?" Angela exclaimed.

"All this time!" the visitor echoed.

Angela smiled back at him, that shining, tender smile which up to this time Jane had supposed belonged exclusively to herself, and said she was going by the clock.

"I have *been being* patient," Jane announced, descending. Before she reached the bottom step, she was picked up and held close in those strong arms.

"I am coming back before very long. In the meantime you and Angela must take care of each other, and go on making places for the fairies, and we'll all try to be patient." This was what he said in her ear.

"*He* isn't a king, is he, Angela?" Jane inquired abruptly at the supper table.

"A king—who?" Angela awoke out of a brown study. "Oh, you mean—why? Do you think he looks like a king?"

"No," replied Jane, "I think he reminds me of the Lord. He is so very kind."

"Jane, darling!—he is kind."

"Do you like him very much, Angela?—Ve*ree* much?"

"Yes," Angela responded briefly.

"I'm going to call him the Kind Man," said Jane, and so satisfied was she with this title she never thought to ask his real name. "When will he come back, Angela?"

"I don't know. Not for a long time, perhaps nev—" Something happened to Angela's voice just here. Jane looked up in surprise, to see her sitting with her elbows on the table, a thing never allowed, her face hidden in her hands.

"Oh, did you burn your finger?" Jane had once burned hers on the teapot. "Does it hurt dreadfully? I'm so sorry."

When Angela lifted her head you could tell by her face it must have hurt.

"It was just for a minute, dear, thank you. I wonder why pain comes in waves that rise and recede?—even the worst isn't always worst. You think you can't stand it possibly, and then you do." Angela had a way of talking to Jane as if she were grown up, and Jane understood a good deal. She remembered it had been just so with her burnt finger.

"Sometimes," Angela went on, "the pain stops almost, but it is sure to come back."

"Unless you have it filled or pulled," said Miss Goldie, walking in.

"You absurd Miss Goldie, what do you mean?" asked Angela, and Jane laughed very hard at Miss Goldie's thinking it was toothache.

When she was being put to bed that night, Jane examined Angela's fingers carefully, and could not find the least little blister. It looked almost as if she had made a fuss about nothing.

After she was tucked in, Jane's thoughts went back to the Kind Man. "I wish I could have told him about the fairy," she said. "But I guess he'll come back. We must all be patient."

CHAPTER III

ROSE DAVENPORT AND THE "ANGEL"

JANE and Miss Goldie loved pretty names. One of their amusements was comparing notes on the subject. Gladys, Gwendolyn and Constance were Miss Goldie's favorites, while Jane preferred Rose and Lillian. They both liked Lucia, which was the name of the princess, and Angela, of course, was most beautiful of all.

Jane remarked one day with a deep sigh that she wished she wasn't *Jane*. Angela, who was consulting with Miss Goldie over some remnants of gingham, replied: "It was your great-great-grandmother's name, you should be proud of it."

"Bernard says it is their cook's name," continued Jane, pensively.

Bernard was the Blind Man's grandson, who came on occasional visits to his grandparents,

and sometimes played with Jane when he could do no better.

"Probably it won't be for long," Miss Goldie suggested encouragingly.

Angela laughed, the transitoriness of the Browns' domestics being well known. "And I love Jane," she said, "and this lovely pink will make her a dear little frock."

The pink dress consoled her for the time being, and not long after this she discovered that by putting your mind to it you could be anybody you wished: so she became Rose Davenport, and found it so pleasant she almost forgot who she really was. Rose had long curls and wore a pink sash every day, while Jane's hair was bobbed and a blue gingham apron shrouded her small person the greater part of the time.

One morning as she strolled up and down the front walk a young man stopped at the gate and asked her name. Jane liked him, for he was an engaging young man, so she replied promptly, lifting a pair of honest brown eyes: "Rose Davenport."

"A pretty name," he said, causing her heart to swell with pride, but only for a minute, for Angela's voice called from the window: "Rose, Rose Davenport, come here, I want you."

Still under the glamour of the part she was playing, Jane presented herself at the bar of judgment. Angela laid down her pen. Her eyes and voice were grave. "Why this is just Jane," she said; "where is Rose Davenport?"

Jane hesitated, twisting one of the long curls that floated from beneath her straw hat. It loosened and came off, and lo! it was nothing but a shaving. "I told him I was Rose Davenport," she answered.

"And what was that?" Angela asked.

Jane was puzzled.

"Was it the truth?"

Jane shook her head, and another curl dropped off.

"If it wasn't the truth, what was it?" Angela insisted inexorably.

Jane, brought up in familiarity with books and catalogues, replied with sudden brightening: "It was fiction, Angela."

At this Angela laughed, and Jane, happily relieved, laughed too. But Angela pushed back her chair and drew Jane to her. "I could not bear to think you would tell a lie, Jane," she said in a tone which restored the gravity of the situation.

"I truly forgot I wasn't Rose. Is it a lie when you truly forget?"

Angela, putting a forefinger beneath the firm little chin, lifted it and gazed long and searchingly into the brown eyes that never flinched. There was no guile in their liquid depths.

"I think I'd try not to pretend so hard," she said, laying her cheek against Jane's. "Some day you may be glad you are just Jane, and not something flowery and pretentious which you can't possibly live up to."

Of what might be involved in living up to a name, Jane of course hadn't the least idea.

"Perhaps," Angela continued hesitatingly, "you might go up to the garret for half an hour to help you to remember who you are."

Jane assented cheerfully. It was her nature to make the best of things, so that not infrequently a punishment, so designed, was transformed into an occasion of enjoyment.

She mounted the stairs to the garret, saying over and over, "I am just Jane, I am just Jane," in a sort of chant, her path strewn with shaving curls, symbols of a return to fact.

At the door of the lumber room she paused, wrinkling her nose much as Mufti would have done, in an effort to identify the odor that mingled with the customary trunky, booky smell. Laurine's scrubbing mixture,—that

was it, and it explained why everything was moved out into the middle of the floor.

Immediately in her path was a leather trunk which had as she knew from experience a fascinating tendency to collapse under her weight, and she promptly availed herself of the diversion thus offered.

The alloy to this amusement was the necessary poking and patting into shape after each collapse, which, when a few minutes had passed, grew tiresome. Jane slipped off and sat on the floor, resting her head against the trunk. She had not once glanced toward the corner by the south window, where she afterwards saw the angel, so it may have been there all the time. She shut her eyes and the next thing she knew someone was calling her, from far away, it seemed. She opened her eyes and saw the angel.

There could be no doubt about the sort of being it was. The beautiful grave face gazed at her over a sheaf of lilies, shining pure and white out of a rainbow radiance. Jane remembered she had been naughty. She wondered how the angel felt about a little girl who said she was Rose Davenport when she was really just Jane. She scrambled to her feet, half frightened.

"Jane, Jane!" It was Angela's voice. "Come down. Uncle Amos is here."

Stumbling over a pile of magazines, Jane ran to the door with one backward glance at the angel. Still a little frightened, clinging to the stair rail, down the two flights she went, and then at sight of Uncle Amos, who was a hearty farmer man, and usually carried apples in his pockets, she forgot the angel.

He and Angela were sitting beside grandfather's wheeled chair in the side yard next the church. This was where grandfather liked to be. He had been ill a long time, ever since Jane could remember, which was not so very long, to be sure, and his mind was not clear, they said. Jane was of the opinion that he pretended about things, as she herself did. Sometimes he called her little Jane, sometimes "Ellie," which was her mother's name. For the most part he was silent, but at all times he seemed to like her presence near him. When she talked to him about the fairy he never once said, "Now, Jane, you are making that up."

The old church interested him more than anything else, and today as Jane sat on Uncle Amos's knee, fastening her white teeth into a red apple, grandfather broke into the con-

versation with, "The church belongs to Jane, Amos. I wish you'd see she has her rights."

Uncle Amos nodded, and said, "Very well, William," and went on talking to Angela.

Grandfather's faded blue eyes traveled around the group, becoming vaguely troubled with the effort to recall something. "Angela, how is it? I forget. Some steps ought to be taken. There was some mistake."

"Don't worry about it now, Father, it is all settled for the best," Angela replied gently.

"His mind has been clearer of late," she told Uncle Amos when she and Jane went to the door with him. "I trust nothing will be done to the church while he lives. It would distress him," she added. Then she asked Jane to run back to grandfather while Ben helped her a little in the house, and Jane went, still not remembering the angel.

"Was there a good congregation today, Jane?" grandfather asked; and with ready comprehension of the game she replied, "Ever so many people, Grandfather," just as if it were Sunday and she had been to church.

"And what was the text, Jane?"

This was a new question. Jane hopped on one foot and considered it. She knew many golden texts, but for a minute she couldn't

think of one. "Oh, I know! I know! it was, 'Don't be afraid. God loves you better than the sparrows.'"

Grandfather's eyes brightened. "A good text," he said, and quite as if they heard themselves mentioned, two important sparrows came twittering down from the church roof. Jane ran to the kitchen for some bread, and grandfather watched while she scattered crumbs, and the greedy birds quarreling over the repast so freely provided, pointed the moral.

The next morning Jane ate breakfast by herself. Grandfather had been "took bad" in the night, she heard Laurine telling Bernard's cook, who came over to borrow something. She was a new one named Maggie, which proved Miss Goldie a true prophet.

There was a strange quiet in the house, the doctor's carriage stood before the gate for a long time. Jane wandered aimlessly about till she suddenly thought of the angel, and stealing up the stairs, she peeped into the lumber room. No angel was to be seen, and since yesterday morning perfect order had been restored. The magazines piled neatly away on the shelves, the trunks moved back against the wall. This was what Angela

wanted of Ben, no doubt. Had they frightened the angel away?

At the foot of the stairs as she ran down, she met Angela, who, before she could speak, held out her arms and hugged her close in such a way that the question died on her lips.

"Jane, darling," Angela whispered, "grandfather has gone away—to heaven."

"Oh, Angela!" Jane cried in joyful understanding, "I know it. I saw the angel that came for him."

"Oh, Jane! Jane!" was all Angela said.

Later Jane questioned Ben. Had he seen anything of an angel in the garret when he was cleaning yesterday?

Ben hadn't. "Little missy say she done seen the angel what come for old marster," she heard him tell Laurine.

"Look like I heard a mighty rustlin' round myself," Laurine responded solemnly.

That afternoon a very singular person arrived in a cab, with innumerable bags. Jane, who was peering through the parlor shutters in company with the Blind Man's wife, who was very kind when you were in trouble, ran into the hall. The newcomer was short and enveloped in veils till you couldn't tell what she was like.

"I hadn't heard a word of it," she was saying. "Tell Miss Angela——" then she saw Jane and demanded, "Who's this?" and when Jane told her, she said, "I'm your Cousin John."

"Why, you look like a lady," Jane responded in surprise, her head on one side, critically.

"Pleased to hear it I am sure," answered Cousin John, removing some veils. "Run tell Angela I am here."

From that minute and during the week she remained, Cousin John took hold and made things go, and Angela let her. Angela was tired out Cousin John said, and for a wonder Angela did not dispute it.

Jane liked Cousin John, because she was funny and had a man's name, but Miss Goldie was terribly afraid of her. She was grown up in the first place, and in the second she stared at one in the most embarrassing manner. This was for the reason that the old lady couldn't see very well and Miss Goldie was rather small, but it put her quite out of countenance. Miss Goldie came around every day, to help by taking care of Jane.

Once, when they went to the drug store to get some cough drops for Cousin John, while

Jane waited at the door, who should pass but the young man with the merry eyes who had asked her name.

"How are you, Rose Davenport?" he said, lifting his hat.

Jane hastened to correct him. "I am not Rose Davenport any more; I mean, I made a mistake. I am just Jane."

The young man was highly amused. "Are you, indeed? Well, Just Jane, I am glad to meet you under any name. I appreciate as never before what the poet says about the rose."

Miss Goldie, though she knew a good deal of poetry, couldn't remember what the poet had said in this connection. She knew "The tear down childhood's cheek that flows, is like the dewdrop on the rose," because it was in the copy book, but, of course, that wasn't it. They must wait till they could look in Bartlett.

CHAPTER IV

COUSIN JOHN AND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

As is always the case in time of trouble, friendly offers to do anything in the world for Miss Angela flowed in from every quarter. Cousin John, who clearly liked a little stir, saw nearly all the callers, and so did Jane.

You couldn't be with her long without discovering that Cousin John was a good deal of a personage. She spoke with authority, with the inherited confidence of unassailable social position; yet she was not an Aloofer exactly. She liked to hob-nob with all sorts and conditions; she was shrewd, humorous, kindly, but she demanded a certain homage and received it. On the whole, the neighborhood approved of Cousin John.

Although she had no very near kindred, she was so extensively related both by blood and marriage, that she was scarcely known by any

other title than Cousin John. Her card, however, read, "Mrs. Johanna Clay." Her grandmother had been a Porterfield, which explains her relationship to Angela and Jane.

She was, it developed, an old inhabitant of Sycamore Street, but about fifteen years before this she had sold her home to St. Anne's and gone abroad, where she had been for the most part ever since.

Cousin John and the Blind Man hailed one another as old friends, and Jane found it most amusing to hear him called Alpheus.

Miss Goldie said, "Think of a baby named Alpheus!" though really it was no more difficult than to think of the Blind Man ever having been a baby.

Cousin John liked Mrs. Marple, who stopped on her way to market with some jelly for Angela. She thought the world and all of Angela and Jane, she said, and patting her on the cheek, she hoped the latter was a good little girl now her aunt was in trouble.

Jane, full of virtue, tried to tell how she helped Laurine make Angela's toast and then carried it up, but Cousin John said, "Never mind, Jane," and took the floor herself, as grown people have the privilege of doing.

In spite of being in a hurry, Mrs. Marple

stayed a good while, talking about many things, from coiffures to the cost of living.

"I tell Percy," she said, "that it is all foolishness wearing a rat when you haven't hair enough to cover it, but she says, 'My gracious! Sister, you don't look like you had any character these days without a pompadour; you might as well not have any chin, like Mr. Samm.' I tell her she ought to be ashamed to make fun of Mr. Samm. He's been a good friend to me." Then she explained how she had come up from the country to be near her son who wasn't doing well and how difficult it was to make the two ends meet.

Ends of what? Jane wondered, but put it aside to ask Miss Goldie. The sound of the door bell brought the caller to her feet and she presently left, saying in conclusion, "I often tell Percy there's nothing cheers me up like having a good talk with someone. I am real glad to know Angela has a friend with her. I am pleased to have met you, Mrs. Clay."

Susie brought some flowers for Miss Angela with her love, and Mrs. Clay named her Cinderella on the spot; for no particular reason, but it seemed to suit. Miss Percy and the faithful Mr. Samm left their cards.

Cousin John must have liked the neighbor-

hood for Jane heard her explaining to some callers of a very different type, that when she finished her visit to Angela she was going to St. Anne's.

These were people from Kenton Place and like regions, who had been reminded by a notice in the daily papers that they knew the Hearns. They were one and all greatly astonished to be received by Mrs. Clay, and Jane noticed they all said exactly the same thing: "It is so far out of the way, don't you know, and really life is such a rush these days it is impossible to keep up acquaintances outside your own immediate circle. Angela is a charming person, but she buries herself down here, and—but you know how it is, dear Cousin John! And this is Ellie's child?—What a darling! How time passes! What will Angela do now? I suppose Mr. Hearn didn't leave anything?—so sad. Surely you are not going to stay down here? At the hospital?—oh, your eyes! It is too bad, but why St. Anne's?"

Of course, these people knew nothing about the Cock and the Horse and probably didn't believe in fairies, and had never heard how kindly and skilfully Sister Philippa and Sister Mary Baptist nursed the sick.

Cousin John didn't trouble to reply to their questions, indeed, it did not appear to be expected. She explained, however, to the Blind Man why she was going to St. Anne's. They could give her a pleasant corner room on the first floor. Here she could have the care she needed, and everything, her oculist told her, depended upon her general health. Here she would be in a position to know what was going on, and to see people as they came and went, and she had a real affection for Sycamore Street, changed as it was.

"But why is that old church standing idle all these years?" she wished to know.

"Ask Carter King," said the Blind Man.

"Nonsense! What has he to do with it?"

"Oh, I don't know," replied the Blind Man. "Jane says it belongs to her."

"Who put such an idea into her head?" demanded Cousin John.

"Grandfather said so," Jane answered, emerging from the window curtain.

"And it strikes me as hard sense," added the Blind Man. "I can't see how that lawsuit ever came to be decided as it was."

"Poor William," sighed Cousin John.

It was she who suggested that little Goldine, as she called her, would make a good compan-

ion for Angela and Jane, who must not live alone in that big house. Nobody, she said, could be more devoted and less exacting.

Jane was delighted at the idea and Miss Goldie's joy went far beyond words when Angela asked her, but there were difficulties to be overcome. Mrs. Deane, Miss Goldie's sister-in-law, at first refused her consent. Though in the habit of speaking of Goldie as a burden she now accused her of base ingratitude for thinking of leaving her. It was really quite an exciting episode and much discussed in the neighborhood, the Blind Man's wife being the only one who espoused Mrs. Deane's cause. In the end, however, matters were adjusted and Miss Goldie, rather crushed by the ordeal, was left free to go to Angela and Jane. At the same time Cousin John installed herself at St. Anne's.

"I shall expect you and Jane and little Goldine to come often to see me," she told Angela, and Jane for one, thought it great fun to go visiting at the hospital.

The main building of St. Anne's stood far back from the street, towards which its broad wings projected, thus enclosing on three sides the sweep of green lawn where two big sycamores grew. It was of red brick, plain and

substantial, and its air was one of friendly calm.

Cousin John was sure she had come to the right place. "I don't wish to be a burden on anybody," she said, "and here I have the satisfaction of knowing that Sister Mary Baptist will win eternal felicity taking care of me, and the harder I make it for her the greater her felicity will be."

In the absence of the Mother Superior, who was in failing health, Sister Philippa was in charge. She had been at St. Anne's for ten years and Angela knew her well, Mr. Hearn having at one time taken a long course of treatment at the hospital. Angela explained this when Cousin John remarked she believed there was some secret between her and Sister Philippa. It was the way in which they smiled at each other, she said.

It was probably all Cousin John's imagination, for when Jane questioned Angela as to the existence of a secret she laughed and exclaimed, "What mountains people do make out of mole hills!"

It didn't occur to Jane to ask an explanation of the lovely color in her cheeks, really more than a mole hill seemed to call for.

CHAPTER V

THE OWL AND THE OGRE

THAT the owl and the ogre had some connection with Susie Merrifield's adventure. Jane felt certain, for had it not happened in the Trust Company Building?

At any rate, whatever view you took of it there could be no doubt as to its effect on Susie. It loosened her tongue, made her eyes shine and gave her a becoming little air of importance, as she related her story.

But first, to go back a little: not long before this, happening to look out of the window, just as she was ready for bed one night, Jane had discovered a gigantic owl in the northern sky; such a wonderfully real owl, it was hard to believe that, as Angela pointed out, it was only the clock tower on the Trust Company Building.

From Jane's window two of its four faces were visible at such an angle that when they

were illuminated at night the yellow disks framed in the shadowy mass of the tower produced this curious illusion. No imagination in particular was required to see it. Even the Blind Man's wife, unless on her guard, must have recognized it as an owl.

This huge bird of prey presiding over the business world seemed to strike Miss Goldie as most appropriate. It reminded her, she said, of an experience of her own, and by dint of much questioning Jane at length extracted from her the story of the ogre who lived beneath the tower, and who, instead of devouring people in the old-fashioned, ogreish manner, ate up their money, their stockings, and bonnets. This was how Jane understood it and it impressed her as very funny and interesting.

One evening when Angela was examining some new books in an easy, after-dinner way, and Miss Goldie cutting buttonholes, Jane looked up from the picture she was coloring, to inquire, "Will he eat up my savings-bank, like Bernard's billygoat? He eats tin cans."

"My darling Jane! You have such a way of asking questions out of a clear sky," Angela exclaimed.

"I mean the ogre," Jane added. "Tell me some more about him, please."

"He devours widows' houses," began Angela.

"And everything in them?"

"No, you can keep the worst of the furniture," said Miss Goldie.

"Now, Jane, listen to me," said Angela. "If you take our stories too seriously Miss Goldie and I won't tell you any more. I have made a discovery which she doesn't know about. It is this: In order that people may be on their guard against this ogre, it has been decreed that at night he must appear in his true character as a bird of prey, and if when you see him you say:

"O gloomy Owl with yellow eyes!
You cannot take me by surprise;
I know you're there and I'll beware,

he will never do you any harm."

Jane was enchanted with this rhyme and at once learned it by heart. Really, when you consider it, there was some little excuse for the opinion of the Blind Man's wife that Angela was most unwise in the way she was bringing up Jane.

"To change the subject," she remarked pres-

ently, "here is a young poet who has drained the cup of life to its dregs and thrusts his musings bound in dove color and gold upon the weary reviewer. I feel moved to write him a kindly note telling him he is a goose."

"It is such a pretty book, I wouldn't hurt his feelings if I were you." Miss Goldie never could bear to hurt anybody's feelings, though Angela tried to persuade her it is sometimes the truest kindness.

"Well, I won't then, especially as I haven't time. I'll simply tell him through the Book Page what you say, that it is a pretty booklet. I shall add that he has a nimble fancy and some idea of versification, and if he would deign to consider matters within the range of his experience there might be hope for him. I'll speak kindly but firmly to 'D.A.K.,' whoever he is." Angela handed it over to Jane to R, while she hastily wrote down her criticism.

Miss Goldie looked on in admiration. Nobody could have fitted in more beautifully than she did. Jane and Angela couldn't think how they had ever got on without her, and anybody with two eyes could see how happy she was.

As Angela was writing the last word Susie

walked in, all enveloped in the halo of her adventure.

"Why, Cinderella, you look as if you had danced with the Prince!" Angela exclaimed.

At this Susie glowed the more, answering with a tilt of her chin, "Well, not exactly."

Angela pushed aside her papers and turned around. "She says she hasn't exactly danced with the Prince," she repeated. "What do you suppose that means?"

"What do you mean, Susie?" Jane asked. "Have you been to a ball?"

Susie laughed. "You are all so funny," she said. "I've only been home over Sunday, but it was the way I got off. You know Mr. Carroll?"

Yes, they all three knew the gentleman by hearsay as a disagreeable, conceited person in the office where Susie worked, who was ever on the alert to assert his authority in all manner of trying ways.

"What has he done now?" Angela asked.

"Well, he was determined I shouldn't go," Susie continued, "even though Mr. Wilkins had said I might. You see, I asked to get off an hour earlier on Saturday, and Mr. Wilkins said certainly, I might leave just as soon as I had the letters ready. Mr. Carroll heard

him say it. Then Mr. Wilkins went away on business, and when I reminded Mr. Carroll, he answered, 'We'll see about it, Miss Merrifield.' I knew then he wasn't going to let me off if he could help it."

"But how could he keep you if Mr. Wilkins had given you permission?" Miss Goldie wanted to know.

"Easily enough. It all depended on his dictating the letters in time, and instead of attending to them at once after lunch, he sat and read the newspaper. That is how he managed it."

"Susie! that was trying. And you are sure he had not forgotten?" asked Angela.

Susie made a scornful mouth at the suggestion. "Forgotten! He simply wished to show his power."

"But you did get off?" Miss Goldie urged, for as Angela often remarked, she liked to have the end of a story first, to save her feelings needless harrowing.

"And then did the Prince come?" Jane put in, by way of hastening matters.

Susie seemed to find this very amusing, laughing so much, in fact, that she could scarcely explain intelligibly about the young man who had been in and out of the office

frequently for several days. It seemed he was a very good looking young man, and all the girls in the stenographic department were wondering who he was, and what he was doing there.

"I remember now that he went up in the elevator one morning with Rose Conway and me, and I was telling Rose about the cheap rates and how afraid I was Mr. Carroll wouldn't let me off.

"Well, on Saturday morning, when I asked Mr. Carroll to let me have the letters as early as possible, he only said, 'I'll let you know when I am ready,' and then, as I told you, when he came in from lunch he just sat there, pretending to read. When he did call me, I knew there was no chance of finishing in time to catch my train.

"All the while I was taking his dictation I was getting madder and madder, and I felt sure I should never be able to read my notes. To make matters worse, that man, who had been loafing around all morning, suddenly began to rattle away on the typewriter, till I thought I should lose my mind.

"When he had finished, Mr. Carroll said, just as if he had suddenly remembered, 'Oh, Miss Merrifield, you wanted to get off early,

didn't you? You should have reminded me.' I couldn't stand that, and I up and told him that he had known it all the time, and needn't pretend he hadn't."

"What did he say to that?" Angela asked.

"Something about my being insulting, and then he went out. I guess I was crying a little as I tried to put my notes together, and I had forgotten the young man, who had stopped writing, till I heard him say behind me, 'Perhaps these will help you make your train,' and before I could take it in, he had dropped some papers on my desk and was gone; and there, if you'll believe it were the letters! He had taken them down at first hand."

"And you caught your train," Miss Goldie concluded with a sigh of relief.

Susie nodded. "He must have heard me telling Rose, you see."

"Really, it is much better than dancing with a prince. Such a kind, resourceful young man," said Angela. "And you don't know his name?"

"I do now, and you'll never guess!" Susie exclaimed impressively, with her new little air of importance.

"Is he anyone very special?" asked Angela in surprise.

"Oh, well, perhaps you won't think so, but Rose told me this morning it was David King. His father is worth millions and millions you know, but he wants David to learn business under Mr. Randall, the president of our company."

"What are millions and millions?" Jane inquired, feeling disappointed.

"Susie means his father is very rich," Angela explained, and it was plain that she, too, failed to be impressed by the climax to Susie's story. "So it was David King," she said coolly.

You couldn't blame Susie if she felt hurt at the reception her great piece of news met with, though Angela added after a moment, that of course it was extremely kind of him. Questions about her visit and the home people were replied to after this in a rather spiritless manner, and Jane could extract nothing from her in regard to the ogre. She seemed to doubt if there was one in the building, and when the verse was repeated to her and she was invited upstairs to see the owl, she said she hadn't time this evening, thank you, she must go.

As she and Jane escorted Susie to the door, and Angela said, patting her shoulder, "It was kind of Mr. King, Cinderella, but don't think

too much about it. Girls in business have to be careful, you know."

When they passed the library door on their way upstairs to bed, Miss Goldie called to Angela, "Randall—he's the one."

"One what?" Jane asked as they mounted the curving flight.

"Never mind—nothing interesting," she was told.

By the time the top step was reached, Jane had thought of another question. "Why do girls have to be careful, Angela?"

"It doesn't do to be too romantic, you know, my darling," Angela told her in such a confidential manner, Jane felt as if she quite understood, and didn't ask another question that night.

CHAPTER VI

AT THE GIANT'S TOMB

It was almost summer, and for weeks everybody in Sycamore Street, except, perhaps, the Blind Man and Cousin John, had been unusually busy. At St. Anne's a crop of new ailments had sprung up to take the place of those superinduced by the peculiarly trying atmospheric conditions which had prevailed during February and March, and the doctors were busy readapting their phrases. There was nothing the matter with the weather now, but it is ever the way when out of doors puts on its most alluring robes and calls in its most musical notes, people begin to clean house, go to the dressmaker and to do other soul-wasting things.

It was not Angela's fault that she had fallen behind this spring, nor that the publishers were pouring such cartloads of books at the office of the *Daily Journal,* that the avalanche

threatened to extinguish the whole staff. The messenger boy brought as many as two dozen in his bag at one time, fairly staggering under their weight. Even Jane was pushed to keep them all R'd.

Orders for lingerie gowns and blouses flowed in upon Madame Berry in a stream which, as the weather grew warmer, became a flood. Miss Goldie had all she could do and more. But at length there came a day when she could see the end, and whenever you can see the end, though it be far off, you may take courage and go on a holiday.

So it was that Jane, in her new pink gingham, carrying a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley from the bed in the side yard, and Miss Goldie, in her last summer's hat, set out to go visiting. They had not tried to go visiting since that eventful day early in the spring when the Cock and the Horse behaved so queerly and they had been obliged to turn back. This was how Jane happened to think of the Kind Man while they waited for a car, and for the first time mentioned him to Miss Goldie, who looked both startled and puzzled.

"You are sure it was a man, Jane?" she asked.

Jane was perfectly sure.

"Dear me!" sighed Miss Goldie, "we don't want a man coming round."

Jane hardly understood this attitude, but she tried to be reassuring. "He is far, far away now," she remarked; then spoiled it by adding: "But he's coming back,—he said so. Angela likes him very much, and so do I."

Why Miss Goldie should be unhappy over the prospect of the Kind Man's return, Jane could not imagine, but you of course can guess that it was because she had learned to be afraid, not only of tangible things like hot soup and fierce dogs, against which we should be on our guard, but also of things that will happen,—perhaps.

Now one of the laws of the country she and Jane had discovered is that no one can stay there who is afraid. This explains why it is not much frequented by the Wise and Prudent, who consider it an evidence of character to take much anxious thought. For a minute it looked as if the afternoon was to be spoiled, but Miss Goldie had evidently just slipped over the border before she knew it, and was able to get back again very quickly, for presently she was saying cheerfully: "I think he was a publisher, most likely, don't you?"

They took a green car and transferred to a yellow one, and Miss Goldie straightened Jane's hat and looked very proud and pleased whenever anyone noticed her charge. People always noticed Jane because of her sparkle, and Jane, who loved to go visiting of all things, was particularly scintillating today.

After climbing a hill, the car turned into a broad space where three streets met, and here Miss Goldie rang the bell. They got out in front of a stone tower on top of which was the figure of an angel, and entering some tall iron gates where a one-armed man stood on guard, they walked up a broad avenue shaded by a double row of trees.

Unless you recognized the angel over the gate, there was nothing to indicate what sort of a place it was Jane and Miss Goldie had chosen for a pleasant afternoon, until you reached a point where the road branched; here the gleam of marble caught the eye, and you knew, if you had not guessed it before, that the angel was Gabriel waiting to blow his trumpet.

Conventional persons will no doubt be shocked at their going thus light-heartedly to a cemetery. And what did Miss Goldie and Jane mean by saying they were going visit-

ing? It was just their way of putting it. Miss Goldie was a person of devices not a few. Her father and mother had headstones in the cemetery, and many old friends besides whom she remembered as part of the old life. These seemed nearer to her, and more real, she said, than some who were still alive but had to all intents forgotten her. So every spring it was her custom to make her friendly rounds, leaving at least the tribute of a gentle thought at each resting place.

"I can't help feeling they are pleased to have a little attention shown them," she said to Jane. "It is sad to be forgotten."

Jane assented, entering about as fully into Miss Goldie's feeling as one of the squirrels that scurried through the grass at their approach.

It is not for long that tears are shed over the most deeply loved among us. No right-minded person would have it otherwise, yet there is something pleasant in the thought of being held in a friendly remembrance like this.

As they walked down the road past the lily pond, and the cypress trees, and on by the lake where the swans floated in stately phalanx, Miss Goldie was always reminded of when she

was a little girl, and this Jane liked better than anything. To her the cemetery was simply another park where stones more or less imposing were placed with the names upon them of people who had gone to Heaven, the sight of which reminded Miss Goldie of many interesting incidents.

It was all up hill and down, a landscape smiling and sunny, with tall forest trees, close-clipped shrubs, and soft, grassy hollows Miss Goldie called dimples, and just now the fraggrance and beauty of roses was everywhere.

In one afternoon it was never possible to visit all the interesting spots, but whatever else might be omitted, Jane insisted upon the giant's tomb and the beautiful lady who wept over her husband's grave.

First she must lay her lilies on grandfather's grave, already green under the soft spring rains. In this beautiful spot you could read the names of many of her kinsfolk. Among them Miss Goldie pointed out another Jane and Angela.

From here they went on to Miss Goldie's lot by the way of the weeping lady. Jane and Miss Goldie were sorry for her, but she was so beautifully dressed you felt things were not so bad as they might be. There was the love-

liest pattern around the hem of her marble gown which fell in rippling folds from her graceful shoulders. Hers was such an exquisite grief it seemed quite sufficient unto itself. One almost envied her.

Miss Goldie's lot was on the hill above the giant's tomb. There was a white birch growing in it, pink geraniums in an iron vase, and an iron bench. These few feet of ground represented all the real estate she owned, and great was her pride in it. She carefully removed some brown leaves from the ivy borders of the mounds, then seated herself on the bench and took out her work with an air of being at home. Jane, meanwhile, went down to visit the giant, promising not to go out of sight.

Built in the hillside, the giant's tomb had a little dooryard of its own, with a gravel path and a flower bed, all neatly kept. Jane thought it like a fairy story. If report were true he had been a harmless giant in his lifetime, if anything rather shrinking from the local fame his size had thrust upon him, and perhaps not ill-content to retire within the quiet of these vine-hung portals. Jane presently sat down to rest on the doorstep—a bit of rose color against the grays and greens.

"Requiescat In Pace," was inscribed above her head, and a peace so profound rested just then upon the hillside, that the stone-cutters putting the finishing touches to a splendid monument not far away, seemed working with muffled tools. Jane sat very still, her hands clasped in her lap, her lips parted, her eyes dreaming. A squirrel paused and sat up on his haunches to look at her, and the busy robins ventured near. In an azure sky great white clouds hung motionless.

A sound of slowly approaching wheels upon the gravel road had so little effect upon the stillness it was not until the carriage stopped immediately in front of her that the spell was broken, and Jane awaking, recognized the Princess.

By her side in the perfectly appointed victoria sat a grey-moustached gentleman, but Jane had no eyes for anyone but the Princess. A wonderful aloofness enveloped them, coachman, footman, and even the horses, holding their heads high and pawing the gravel haughtily. Jane would have preferred a golden chariot such as she had seen at the circus, but even so, she was not unimpressed by the extreme elegance of this equipage. She regarded it with composed interest. Always, heretofore, the Princess had driven by.

We may be quite sure that up to this time in Miss Lucia King's thought, cemeteries had not included little girls in pink, sitting beside vine-hung tombs, but were rather, so her expression plainly revealed, places haunted by melancholy, entirely disassociated from thoughts of joy; and Jane and joy were closely related.

As the Princess stepped from her carriage, Jane stood up and smiled, quite as if this were a visitor coming to call upon her. Now, as was said of Rosette in the fairy tale, one little smile of Jane's was worth a hundred pieces of gold. Lucia smiled in response, but it was an aloof smile and faded quickly.

The Princess lost nothing of her charm at close range. Perfection of detail was her most marked characteristic. The effect as a whole might be slightly remote and cold, a kind of crystalized grace, that never quite forgot itself, but it was exquisite.

"What are you doing in this strange place, little girl?" she asked, in the gentlest of voices.

It was far from seeming a strange place to Jane, she was surprised, but she couldn't contradict the Princess, so she only said: "I'm resting on the giant's doorstep. Would you like to look in? If you stand on tiptoe you

can see," pointing to the opening in the iron door.

There was really nothing to see but a marble slab with gold letters on it, which you could not readily make out, but Lucia shrank from the suggestion as from something terrible.

But the dimpling smile with which Jane gave her invitation was so entirely out of keeping with the morbid taste it seemed to evidence, that in the act of turning away the Princess paused and asked, perhaps with some vague idea of a gardener's child floating through her mind, "Do you live here?"

"Why, nobody lives here," said Jane. "I live in Sycamore Street."

"This is the child who picked up my hat for me the other day," exclaimed Lucia's companion who now stood beside her; "and wouldn't tell me her name," he added reproachfully.

Now, for the first time, Jane had eyes for the kingly gentleman.

"Won't you tell me your name?" Lucia asked. Her voice was so gentle and charming you couldn't think of refusing her request.

"Yes," said Jane, "it is Jane Porterfield West."

"Jane Porterfield——" the Princess repeated. "Where have I heard that name?" She turned to her father but he had moved away and was gazing at the monument across the road, as if he had changed his mind and didn't care about names.

From behind the marble shaft at this moment walked another gentleman, rather kingly, too, in his way, but younger and less stout. He shook hands with Miss Lucia and said something about its being a bore their not allowing automobiles in the cemetery. Lucia called him Mr. Randall, and seemed glad to see him.

After he had greeted Mr. King, she appealed to him to know why the name of this child, pointing to Jane, had a familiar sound. "Jane Porterfield," she repeated.

"Porterfield is one of the pioneer names of the state," her father interposed. "There was a Matthew Porterfield——"

"But it is Jane I want to know about," Lucia insisted, smiling.

"Porterfield—Jane," Mr. Randall said, as if reading from a directory, "don't you remember, Miss Lucia—? but of course you don't, you were only a child;" he turned to her father, "In that lawsuit over that church prop-

erty was not the original donor of the ground Jane Porterfield? I think so. By the way," he added, "didn't I see poor Hearn's death the other day?"

Jane stood looking from one to the other of the speakers, not clearly understanding, but rather fascinated by the conversation, when she heard Miss Goldie calling.

Miss Goldie explained afterwards that for a moment she had forgotten Jane, and then suddenly remembering and rising to look for her and seeing her talking to several strangers, the idea of kidnappers flashed into her brain, and she ran down the hillside, her work bundled under one arm and her bag dangling, to be transfixed with surprise when she saw who they were.

"I think your—ah—governess is calling you," Lucia said, and the veil of aloofness which had lifted, fell again. Without saying good-bye even, she walked across the road to the monument, followed by her father and Mr. Randall.

"And to think," said Miss Goldie, putting Jane's hat on, and folding the delicate linen cambric upon which she was embroidering, "that this is one of her very own blouses. Suppose she had known!"

If to suppose it beggared the powers of Jane and Miss Goldie, it may as well be given up. So Angela said when she heard about it.

At the gate as they started for home, they encountered the Blind Man talking to the one-armed custodian. "I don't see, and you can't make me," he was saying when he broke off and joined them. He had been studying the latest absurdities in tombstones, he remarked, "And I cannot see," he added, "why people have so little sense either of propriety or humor. Just look at that towering extravaganza of Carter King's!" It was plain the Blind Man had been having a most enjoyable afternoon reflecting upon the folly of his fellow citizens as evidenced in their mortuary memorials.

"Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud!" he demanded, greatly embarrassing Miss Goldie, for she didn't know. The Blind Man dampened her spirits. The extravagances of the rich did not shock her and Jane any more than the gold and diamonds in a fairy tale. Miss Goldie really laid herself open to the suspicion that she, too, would have had a lofty granite shaft if she could have afforded it.

"Don't you like the giant's tomb?" Jane asked.

"Hey? What's that? Oh, it does well enough. But I can't see why any fuss should be made over him. He wasn't much of a giant —a lazy scamp." It should be noted that nobody was making any fuss but the Blind Man himself.

While they waited for their car, the Princess and her father drove by. "There's Carter King," remarked the Blind Man in an uncomfortably loud tone. "But for him, you and I could build big monuments, too, if we had the bad taste to want them."

Jane, coming into the library after giving Mufti his supper, heard Miss Goldie saying, "I knew him the minute I saw him. He looks just as he did the day he was so rude to mother."

"Who does? Who was rude?" she asked.

"Never mind, my dear little pitcher," Angela answered, "nobody you know."

CHAPTER VII

THE KINGS

Up to this time, as has been said, Kenton Place had remained for the most part oblivious of Sycamore Street. But now there began to be signs of an invisible influence at work to break through the aloofness; some gently impelling force that tended towards the mingling of these far separated neighborhoods. Unless like Jane, you believe in fairies, you will find it hard to explain.

From the standpoint of the Wise and Prudent, Sycamore Street had nothing to offer Kenton Place, whose actual if unwritten maxim was, "According to your bank account be it unto you;" and all that Sycamore Street asked of the Aloofers was to be allowed to look at them from a safe distance.

Cousin John, being a person of wealth and importance, received many calls. By her Aloofer friends she was considered too quaint

for words, and it was quite the thing to show her attention. This brought St. Anne's to the notice of many who before were scarcely aware of its existence; and even in the brief period of a call, its immaculate, noiseless efficiency made itself felt.

Among these visitors was Lucia King, whose family was connected by marriage with Mrs. Clay's. Her car was waiting before St. Anne's one afternoon when Angela and Jane went in, as they did every day or two, to see how Cousin John was, and cheer her up if her eyes were paining her. They met Lucia in the corridor, escorted to the door by a meekly admiring sister. Apparently, she did not recognize Jane, but Angela said, "Never mind, she wasn't expecting to see you in a hospital, and besides our backs were to the light."

However this may have been, such was Miss King's air of aloofness on this occasion, she hardly seemed to be there at all. It was really an interesting phenomenon. It was rather shocking to have Cousin John say flatly that Lucia was a bore.

"She is so imbued with her own importance, she tires me, yet in a way I am sorry for her," the old lady said.

Jane realized that princesses, being for the most part purely decorative, should not have too many demands made upon them, but Cousin John did not understand this. She evidently expected Lucia to be—well, like Angela, for instance. She acknowledged that, perhaps, it wasn't Lucia's fault. When you bring a child up to thank God every day that she is more fortunate than other people, it is only a step further to thinking herself better. "She came to see me from a sense of duty and because that nice girl I knew in Dresden, Hildegarde Grant, asked her to," said Cousin John.

In spite of having been bored by Lucia, she found a great deal to say about her and her family, going back to the time her father and mother were married. She wondered what sort of a boy David was. She had heard that like most sons of rich men he was inclined to be a bit wild.

"What's a bit wild, Angela?" Jane asked, looking up from the picture paper, supposed to be occupying her attention.

"Never mind, my pet, don't interrupt Cousin John," was Angela's reply, and Jane realized that, as usual, she must content herself with what crumbs of meaning she could gather

without assistance, from the grown-ups' conversation. Again and again it happened that long afterwards the meaning of something she had not understood at the time flashed out suddenly clear and plain.

Susie Merrifield also came in touch with Aloofers, many of whom had business in the Trust Company building. Besides, there was her little adventure, which, having got abroad, was much talked of in Sycamore Street. You may not see the logic of it, but a single act of kindness done by the son of a millionaire, takes on an importance that is in exact ratio to the number of paternal millions.

Miss Percy, stopping to chat a minute at the gate as Angela and Jane went home, said Rose Conway told her that Mr. King talked to Susie every chance he got. "Not that I think anything of it," Miss Percy said, tossing her head, "Rose exaggerates, and, anyway, Susie's too quiet. She never makes the most of herself."

The Blind Man, who had joined them, remarked with a chuckle, glancing over his shoulder at Miss Percy's stylish figure crossing the street, that this was a sin which couldn't be laid at her door or pompadour either.

If Angela really was as tired of hearing

about the Kings as she professed to be, it was rather hard on her the way they were dragged into the conversation at every turn. There was Miss Goldie putting some delicate embroidery on another of Lucia's blouses when they went in, and calling attention to it.

As it chanced, this same blouse was the occasion of a visit Jane and Miss Goldie paid to Kenton Place. It seemed it had been promised together with some other work, by noon on Wednesday, without fail, but through a mistake of Miss Goldie's it was overlooked till after the other things had been sent. Madame Berry was annoyed, it was so hard to get hold of a delivery boy; whereupon Miss Goldie said she would take it herself, "Jane will go with me, won't you, Jane?" she added.

Jane clapped her hands, indeed she would! So what looked at first like an ill wind, brought much pleasure in its train. But for it Miss Goldie would have sat over her work all afternoon.

"May I wear my new dress with the blue rosettes, please, Angela? 'Cause we're going to see the Princess?" Jane begged.

"We are not going in, you know, Jane," Miss Goldie hastened to remind her. "We'll just leave it at the door and then walk around

and choose which house we'd rather live in."

Angela said as they were going into such a select part of town Jane might wear her new frock anyhow, there was no telling whom they might see.

When her toilet was complete, Jane surveyed herself with great satisfaction in the long glass. "I'm all matched," she said, twisting her neck to see the rosettes on her back, that were the very shade of the forget-me-nots on her hat and the borders of her short socks. She added, with a quizzical upward glance at Angela, "This is Rose Davenport."

Angela laughed and hugged her close. "No, it is just my precious Jane," she insisted. "Now run along, Miss Goldie is waiting."

"It *is* pretty out here," Miss Goldie said as they followed the broad curve of the street which, flanked by two rampant stone lions, marked the entrance to Kenton Place. On every hand were handsome dwellings and well-kept gardens, an almost flawless order and beauty enfolded them. A pleasant change, indeed, from Sycamore Street! Jane and Miss Goldie walked sedately as if they, too, were part and parcel of this grandeur. They were feeling the spell of aloofness, against which few of us are proof.

As was to be expected, the Kings' palace quite outdid the rest. The velvet lawn, the smooth, white drive that led to the porte cochère, the spotless marble of the steps they ascended, the loftiness of the doorway, the supreme elegance of it all, made Miss Goldie, so she said afterwards, feel like a mosquito. As for Jane, her brown eyes were so busy, her tongue for the moment was still.

"Please to walk in. Miss King wishes to speak to the messenger from Madame Berry."

Miss Goldie stared vacantly at the impressive person who uttered these words. Jane was obliged to jog her elbow and repeat, "He says to come in." Then in they went. Had Angela a prophetic soul that she assented so readily to the blue rosettes?

The hall was very spacious and full of wonderful things, but after the undiluted sunshine without, the light from the stained window on the great staircase seemed dim to them as they sat together on a carved bench. They had waited here some time, and Miss Goldie had twice remarked that she thought the man must be mistaken, for Madame Berry had said just to hand it in, when down the stairs, rather noisily, came a young man.

At first he didn't notice them, being such a

pair of mosquitoes, perhaps, then something brought him up short, and he exclaimed, "I'll eat my hat if it isn't Just Jane!—or is it Rose Davenport today?"

Jane had not forgotten those merry eyes and that engaging smile.

"No, it's Jane," she told him, standing up and shaking hands, and she added, "but we found out what the poet said about the rose. Miss Goldie looked in Bartlett."

"Really!" the young man laughed. "Is this Miss Goldie? I am David King," and he shook hands with her too.

Naturally, Miss Goldie was embarrassed, and felt obliged to explain that she had brought a parcel for Miss King which Madame Berry said just to hand in at the door, but the man said Miss King wished to see her. This was the third time.

"It is all right I am sure. She will see you presently. She is dressing to go out." Even as David was speaking a maid appeared to conduct Miss Goldie to Miss King.

"Jane will stay with me, won't you, Jane? We want to gather some roses. I'll take care of her." David looked at Miss Goldie, who seemed doubtful.

"Yes, I'll stay with David," Jane an-

nounced firmly, slipping her hand into his; and when she spoke in this tone it took more than argument to move her. If Miss Goldie had any idea of objecting she reconsidered it.

She was wiser than she knew for David King was another whom it was next to impossible to resist, who was accustomed to carry a point by sheer wheedlesome charm. Jane and David together presented an invincible front to the enemy.

He led her on to a gallery, which was really a beautiful out-of-door drawing-room, overhanging the rose garden, just now in its perfection. So cunningly screened by trees and shrubbery was this garden you might have thought yourself in the heart of the country instead of not more than a mile from Sycamore Street.

Jane clapped her hands. "Is this where you live?" she asked. "It's a pretty nice place."

"Glad you think so. Let's go down and cut some roses. What sort do you like best?"

Down they went into the midst of the fragrance and beauty, and were joined presently by a sociablae airedale named Marcus, whom Jane loved at first sight.

Beside his merry eyes, David had a mop of

bright brown hair in which sparkles of light gleamed as he walked bareheaded in the sunshine cutting flowers and laughing at Jane, who was so full of happiness and a desire to tell her new friend all the interesting things she knew that she really was rather funny.

"Angela! Who is Angela?" David asked Jane having mentioned the name.

She explained.

"Does she sometimes go to the Trust Company?"

Jane nodded. She was still feeling hurt because Angela had gone just the other day and had not invited her.

"Is she tall and rather fair—like this?" David held up a creamy rose.

It seemed a fairly good description of Angela, Jane thought. "Do you know her?" she asked.

"No, but I saw such a person standing in the door of the Trust Company talking to one of our stenographers who afterwards told me she was Miss Angela Hearn. Somehow, I thought it might be your Angela."

The Princess stood on the steps beckoning with a lace parasol. She was a vision of loveliness in her airy draperies. "David!" she called, "Do please come. We are late now."

"I have been waiting half an hour," David replied, taking his time with Jane's roses. "Oh, I beg your pardon! This is Miss Jane—I forget the rest. Just Jane will do. Jane, this is my sister."

"Why, she is the little girl I saw in the cemetery," Lucia exclaimed, "Jane Porterfield, isn't it? Don't you remember I told you about her calling one of those vaults the giant's tomb?"

Jane, gazing steadily at her, said: "It is the giant's tomb."

David upheld her and proved his intelligence. "Of course it is. Didn't you ever hear of Beaman the giant? Why, when I was a kid——"

Lucia interrupted, "David, you must come. Please!"

"Are you going to a garden party, too, Just Jane?" he asked, handing over the roses. "No? You have my envy. I trust we may meet again soon."

Jane and Miss Goldie had a great deal to tell Angela. Miss Goldie explained once more how she was certain the man must be mistaken, for Madame Berry had said just to hand it in, but it seemed that not only had something been left out of the box sent Miss King

in the morning, but something that did not belong was put in. Lucia's maid, telephoning about the missing blouse, mentioned it, and Madame Berry said to give it to Miss Deane who would be out directly with the blouse, and Miss King had seized the opportunity to speak to Miss Deane about some embroidery she wanted done after a special manner.

Angela said she was glad to have a clear statement from her, as Jane's conversation was such a hopeless jumble of Davids and dogs and roses, she couldn't make head or tail of it.

The roses spoke eloquently for themselves, however, and Miss Goldie, having disposed of the blouse satisfactorily, remarked that if this was the young man who was kind to Susie she didn't wonder. He would be kind to anybody. And so good looking!

"Dear me, Miss Goldie, is that you?" Angela exclaimed, laughing. "You aren't quite complimentary to Susie, by the way."

Jane was surprised to hear it was David who had been kind to Susie. "I wish I had asked him about the ogre," she said. "This is the rose that looks like you, Angela," she added, pointing it out.

Angela was astonished. "Like me?" she

said. When it was explained she shrugged her shoulders and remarked she was much obliged to Mr. King.

"But you don't look so very pleasant, Angela," was Jane's comment.

Then Angela laughed and begged her pardon for being ungracious, but she was rather tired of the Kings.

CHAPTER VIII

BEGINNING WITH A TEA PARTY

Jane, all dimples, ran over one morning to invite Cousin John to take a cup of tea under the ash tree in the back yard at five o'clock. Now, Jane's back yard, though not to be compared with Lucia's garden—that would be absurd—was a pleasant place in the late afternoon. There was a grape arbor with a swing in it, where you could sit and watch the shadows cast by the grape leaves on the brick walk; along the fence grew hollyhocks and golden glows against a background of clematis and hop vines, and the sturdy ash lifted its head as high as the house, in the midst of a grassy lawn. Here walked the spirit of everyday happiness; here you breathed the odor of blackberry jam, and of other things in season, cooking on the charcoal furnace under Laurine's management, and often there were

skimmings. Lucia King, we may suppose, knew nothing of pleasures like these, and it really seems that when you are too poor, or too rich, or too anything to smell your own jam in process of making, you are to be pitied.

As it was Saturday and half-holidays had begun, Susie Merrifield was there, crocheting in hand, looking, Cousin John said, as demure as a daisy. "Any more adventures, Cinderella?" she asked, for of course she, too, had heard the story.

Susie only smiled shyly with her lashes well over her eyes and said "No." In spite of her dark glasses, Cousin John, in a becoming cap, had more than ever the air of being a person of importance. She lent dignity to the occasion, Angela said.

Jane had the bliss of handing the cups and not minding if she did spill a little, for it was on the grass. There were small cakes fresh from the oven, or bread and butter if you preferred. A belated magnolia bloom which Ben had cut from the tree in the front yard, adorned the table, and you could see how apt Miss Goldie's comparison was, really more than David's, as Angela poured tea, smiling at Jane and warning her to be careful.

A foreign letter had come for Angela that

morning; Jane and Miss Goldie were on the doorstep when the postman left it and Miss Goldie remarked on the stamp. Angela put it aside with an air of considering it of no special importance and opened several others, then she left the room carrying the foreign letter with her. When she returned after a while, she kissed Jane for no apparent reason. It was, of course, allowable to kiss her whenever the fancy seized you, Jane herself saw nothing unusual in this, but she did notice the soft radiance in Angela's face that smoothed out all the little, anxious lines.

Perhaps it is unnecessary to try to account for Angela's looking so especially lovely this afternoon. The letter may or may not have had something to do with it. As she did not mention it, politeness demands that curiosity be restrained.

Susie rather shyly mentioned that Mr. King had asked her who the beautiful young lady was he saw her talking to in the door of the Trust Company. The situation lends itself to various interpretations. It suggests a reason for David's stopping to talk to Susie, if you feel skeptical about her field flower prettiness attracting the much courted son of Carter King. On the other hand, you will understand

how it might have been possible for Susie, encouraged by a romantic friend, to build a charming little castle on a slight foundation. Many of our conclusions are founded upon guesswork; often like Jane, we jump to wrong ones, and oftener like her, we are quite unaware of the real significance of much that goes on around us.

In this connection Jane wished to mention David and the rose, but Angela while she said, "Thank you," politely to Susie, shook her head and said, "Never mind," to Jane, and sent her to ask Laurine to bring a rug to go under Cousin John's feet.

"Unless I am mistaken," Cousin John was saying when she returned with Laurine and the rug, "Carter will never make a business man of David. Give me another lump, Jane. They tell me he thinks himself a poet. His mother used to write rather nice verses before her illness, poor thing! I have reason to think she worried herself ill over that church business. She was a gentle, sensitive creature, but without much force."

"What church business?" Jane asked.

"Dear me, Jane, you don't have to understand everything," Cousin John told her. "That's too long a story."

Angela, in the act of dropping a slice of lemon into her own cup, exclaimed, "He writes poetry you say?"

"I suppose it is poetry, I haven't read any of it. I hear he has published a small volume."

"He writes stories, too," Susie volunteered, and Cousin John added he would never amount to a row of pins with all that money.

The Blind Man coming along with a book under his arm spied the tea party in the distance and walked in to investigate. "Upon my word! I can't see the sense in this sort of thing. Haven't you a house to eat and drink in?" He frowned at Angela because the sun was in his eyes.

"We are in search o. novelty; won't you have a cup of tea?" she asked.

"Sit down, Alpheus, and stop criticising. Why shouldn't we have our tea on the house top if we wish?" asked Cousin John.

The Blind Man accepted the tea, allowing Jane to drop three lumps into it, then he began to chuckle. "I know what you are up to," he said. "You are trying to be in the fashion. Miss Lucia King gave a garden party the other day. A most select affair—exquisite summer toilets and so on."

"Were you there," inquired Cousin John, "or do you read the society news?"

"Oh, I get the cream of it from Mrs. Browne. No, I don't take any in my tea, thank you, Miss Goldie."

"The Kings have gone now for the summer, they left yesterday. Bella Lawrence, who was in to see me today, is mortified to be the last one to go, though down in her heart she knows she would be more comfortable at home."

"Think," said Angela, "of all the comfort and beauty that is shut up in the summer-time, with no one to use or see it!"

"Can't God see it?" Jane asked.

"If He can see some things, I don't envy Him, that's all," remarked the Blind Man, as Jane made a dive after Mufti, who had ventured forth from some place of retirement, scenting cream.

"No doubt if you were God you would improve the world a lot, Alpheus," said Cousin John, rising, "but I believe I am glad you are not."

"I don't know that I care for the job myself," the Blind Man owned. "If you will let me finish my tea I'll see you home, madam."

"If you call St. Anne's home," said Cousin

John, adding, "well, little Goldine, what are you looking so solemn about?

"When you have tea *al fresco* again, Angela, let me know. I have not felt so festive in a long time," were Cousin John's parting words.

On another Saturday afternoon they put their supper in a basket and went to the park to see the sunset, or at least this is what they tried to do.

The sky looked doubtful before they started, and the Cock and the Horse were in one of those queer moods when you couldn't tell certainly for the life of you which was head and which tail. In fact, they resembled those magic pictures in psychology books that turn inside out while you watch. Miss Goldie gave it up and decided to take her umbrella.

By the time they reached the park the clouds were gathering darkly in the northwest, halfway up the hill a drop fell on Jane's nose, and they just made it and no more, bursting into the shelter house in the breathless, laughing manner of persons caught in the rain and having to run for it, and were all much astonished as the storm broke over them to find someone else had sought refuge there. Someone who had left town several days ago according to the papers and had no right to be

there at all; no less a person, in fact, than David King.

It was such a fearful storm that ceremony went literally to the winds. They could only crowd together in the center of the pavilion and wait breathlessly for its passing. David made himself useful by holding Jane up out of the wet, and the two exchanged smiles of great friendliness, conversation being impossible. When at length there came a lull, a person who had so recklessly got himself rained on for your benefit, could not be ignored, and even if Jane had not been there, Angela must have succumbed to David's charm of manner and his boyish good looks. Jane was frankly enamoured, Miss Goldie entirely disarmed, and Susie's enjoyment of the situation was visible beneath her demureness, so there was nothing for Angela to do, as there was no going down the hill just yet, but invite him to share their supper. Nothing, not even the dampness, could keep it from being a merry repast, and what a comfort it was to have him take care of Jane down the slippery road when they started for home.

At the loop there was no car in sight, and a park guard said there had not been one since the storm, whereupon David went into the beer

garden to telephone, thus again demonstrating the usefulness of a man. He returned to report the cars tied up somewhere, but that there would be a machine in a few minutes to take them back to town. And however Angela may have felt about it, the bliss of the rest of the party knew no bounds. Jane jumped up and down and clapped her hands and said over and over, "I'm going to ride in an automobile!" And her open delight did not exceed Miss Goldie's silent ecstacy, as with what wonderful, smooth swiftness they were carried homeward along the boulevard. When they reached the point where the trolley line crossed it, there was a car, so they might just as well have waited, Angela said, but none of the others agreed with her.

CHAPTER IX

"WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF MORTAL BE PROUD?"

LAURINE, who opened the door for them, said a gentleman's heart had failed him in front of the church just before the storm, and they had carried him into St. Anne's.

If everybody had to be taken to St. Anne's when their hearts failed them, Angela remarked, it would have to enlarge its borders still more.

The Blind Man stopped next morning to ask if they had seen the account of Carter King's illness in the paper, and sure enough there it was on the first page, so conspicuously placed they had overlooked it.

"Carter ought to have at least ten good years ahead of him," he added, "but they say he can't possibly recover. I went to school with Carter. Well, his money won't do him

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much good now, but he has a fine tombstone all righty righty—eh, Miss Goldie?"

Miss Goldie looked grave; she never joked about death.

Angela and Jane met David at the hospital gate that afternoon. Such a different David from the one they had picnicked with only the day before, so white and sad.

Angela held out her hand with the look she always wore when you were in trouble, Jane knew it very well. David seemed not to want to let the hand go.

"Thank you," he said, "we haven't any hope except that he may live till my sister gets here tonight."

Jane felt unhappy because he didn't smile at her.

"Didn't you know Lucia and David when you were all children?" Cousin John asked Angela.

"Yes, Ellie and I went to dancing school with Lucia. David was a pretty, curly-headed boy, rather younger, I remember," was her reply.

Jane was greatly astonished. There was no knowing what thrilling incidents connected with that most interesting of periods, when mother and Angela were little girls, remained yet unrevealed.

Miss Goldie was surprised, too, when Jane told her. "You really knew her when you were a little child and never said a word?" she cried.

"I knew lots of people and never said a word. I did not dream it was such an important matter," Angela responded, smiling.

But surely she must have been convinced of it before she was through answering questions.

The rich man lingered several days, lying unconscious in a room whose windows looked out upon the gray walls of the old church opposite. The neighborhood was interested and sympathetic. It felt a civic pride in Carter King. It also found satisfaction in the reflection, consoling if obvious, that death evened things up, bringing the great man to the common level.

"The only difference now is that he can have a grander funeral, and that can't matter much to him," Mrs. Marple remarked.

The Blind Man, of course, quoted from his favorite poem:

"The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;

And the young and the old, and the low and
the high,
Shall moulder to dust and together shall lie.

"But it's queer about death," he added, "it is always getting ahead of you. You assume a certain attitude towards a man and then the first you know he is dead. There's something ironical in it. There's no use hating a dead man."

It was noted that Carter King had not long survived the man with whom he had once been intimately associated, who, in the opinion of some, had been deeply wronged by him. Business and church matters had been curiously mixed in their quarrel, it was difficult to get at the right of it, Cousin John held.

There was some curiosity expressed as to what had brought him to the old church neighborhood on the afternoon of his stroke, but there were no means of satisfying it.

A week after the funeral a memorial service was held for Carter King in the Kenton Place Church. Cousin John, being a connection, felt obliged to attend. The minister, Dr. Brewer, she reported, referred most beautifully to the last words of the dying man. It seemed that just before the end he had

aroused from unconsciousness, and calling his daughter's name, said, with perfect distinctness, "Remember—the church—it belongs to God."

In a few graceful and appropriate sentences, Dr. Brewer interpreted these broken words as evidence of Carter King's love for, and loyalty to, the church to which he had given so liberally in his lifetime and of his desire that those who came after him should continue to serve it.

Jane, in the long summer days that followed, often played in the church yard, entering it by means of the broken place in the back fence. One morning she began to pull away the ivy that hid the letters on the corner stone. She worked diligently until "My House shall be called——" was uncovered, then an alarming spider frightened her and Angela said she must let the ivy alone for fear of other spiders.

CHAPTER X

A LODGER

It was Labor Day—which, everybody knows, is the first Monday in September—the date being fixed past any dispute by the fact that Mr. Samm was varnishing the front door. The weather was warm, so it could not have been Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's, and it wasn't the Fourth, because Mr. Samm remembers taking Miss Percy down to the White City on that day. Succeeding events have dimmed Miss Percy's own recollection of this, but that is no matter, for Mrs. Marple as usual upholds Mr. Samm, remarking if it was not Labor Day it wasn't any day; and she recalls that Susie was coming in just as Mr. Penrose went out and he held the gate for her, and Susie wanted to know who that round-faced young man was? Susie says she didn't at all, but what harm if she did?

Jane, too, remembers, for she and Miss Goldie had been to see the parade, and afterwards, spying Mr. Samm at work, she had gone across and sat on the grass to watch him. The ardor Mr. Samm brought to his chosen task was inspiring. Odd jobs of this sort appealed to him. At intervals, Mrs. Marple and Miss Percy came out to see how it was going to look.

"I declare, it is real good of you, Mr. Samm," the former remarked upon each occasion. The more critical Miss Percy pointed out the spots he had missed and graciously said he might jap-a-lac a few chairs when he got through.

"Bring 'em along," said Mr. Samm, gaily. As he worked he sang and whistled by turns, "Will there be any stars in my crown?"

"If you aren't careful about that ladder there'll be more than you bargain for," the Blind Man, who had crossed the street to see what was going on, chillingly told him.

Perceiving that a profane application was being made of his song, Mr. Samm changed it to "The oldtime religion is good enough for me."

The Blind Man went his way and the painter had returned to his first and more

tuneful song, when the young man who is the innocent cause of all this insistence upon the date, turned the corner into Sycamore Street.

He looked tired and as if he had walked far in the September heat, and he paused at Mrs. Marple's gate in an undecided manner. Jane eyed him indifferently, her knees hugged up to her chin. He gazed up and down the street, referred to a scrap of paper he held, then as with a sudden spurt of energy entered.

"When I wake with the blest
In the mansions of rest
Will there be any stars in *my* crown?"

Mr. Samm demanded with a dramatic flourish, as his brush executed a bit of particular work along the edge of a panel. The discouraged looking young man hesitating at the foot of the steps, the door bell being barricaded by the ladder, smiled.

"When I wake with the blest——"

reiterated Mr. Samm and brought up with a start, as he caught sight of the stranger.

"Does Mrs. Marple live here?" the newcomer asked.

"She does," Mr. Samm replied briefly, and

returned to his work as if the matter were forever closed. Knowing the circumstances, the inference is he had no idea of encouraging the advent of the other young men, being well aware of the tentative position he occupied in Miss Percy's regard.

Mrs. Marple's appearance upon one of her tours of inspection relieved the situation, and Mr. Samm relenting so far, indicated, "A person to see you, Mrs. Marple."

Jane rose and drew nearer, with frank curiosity.

"A room?" said Mrs. Marple. "Well, no, to tell the truth, I haven't just now—that is, if it is a single room you want."

The young man replied with a smile that he was a single gentleman, which statement showed Mr. Samm's fears to be well grounded.

"Percy!" called Mrs. Marple over her shoulder, "how long does Mr. Green expect to stay?"

"Ask me something easier," responded Miss Percy, blithely, looking out from behind Mr. Samm's ladder, "why?"

"This gentleman wants a room," Mrs. Marple explained.

"My name is Penrose," the stranger said, presenting his card. "I have come here as assistant to Dr. Brewer."

"If you could find a room in the neighborhood, I could feed you." Mrs. Marple sat down on the step to consider. "Jane, I wonder if Angela wouldn't take him? She said something the other day about taking roomers. Do you believe you'd send him over there if you were me, Percy?"

"It wouldn't hurt anybody so far as I can see. If she doesn't want him she can say so."

"That's right," her sister agreed.

"Suppose you go with him, Jane, and tell Angela I sent him, thinking she might let him have a room till Mr. Green goes, anyway. If she won't, you are no worse off," she added to Mr. Penrose. "She knows Dr. Brewer. And tell her I can feed you. I always feel interested in young men," she added, "for I have a son of my own."

"Thank you. It is pleasanter here than any place I have seen. I was beginning to feel discouraged," the stranger said.

It must have been owing to Mr. Samm's varnish. There is nothing like it for imparting an air of cleanliness and prosperity, even though you object to the odor.

"You must never get discouraged," Mrs. Marple told him cheerily. "We'll fix it up some way. You try Miss Hearn. Jane will take you."

Without a word Jane led the way, meeting the stranger's attempts at friendliness with extreme reserve. Three red cushions of varying sizes (an idea of Miss Goldie's), had just been placed on the doorstep by Laurine, and his remark that they were evidently intended for the big bear, the little bear and the middle-sized bear, brought a twinkle. Indeed, Jane had to try very hard not to laugh, as she said, indicating the middle-sized one, "You can sit there, and I'll tell Angela."

"Dear me, Jane, a roomer!" Angela exclaimed. "I did say I wanted one or two, but a lodger in the hand seems much less desirable than one in the bush. What does he look like?"

Jane reflected. "He is better looking than Mr. Samm," she decided.

Angela laid down her pencil. "In that case we'll interview him," she said.

The interview resulted favorably. "A modest young man with nice teeth," was the description she gave Miss Goldie at the supper table; "and as we don't have to feed him, his room rent will be almost clear gain. I am pleased with the idea of roomers."

If Angela was pleased, what could have been the sentiments of Mr. Roger Penrose? Since that torrid September day he has often

told how relieved he felt when Jane at last smiled, and how comfortable he found the red cushion after his long walk, and then how beyond his wildest dreams were both the landlady and the room she offered for his inspection. He was ready to agree to anything, even to the statement that the room being in the wing was convenient to the side entrance if he should be called out at night, though he did not in the least understand this last advantage.

Miss Percy came over that evening to convey Mrs. Marple's thanks. It was a real accommodation, she said.

"Sister had an application from Professor Bell, the palmist, last week. He wanted the two parlors and a bedroom. For my part I wish she could have taken him, but she says she isn't sure it's right anyway, and Mr. Samm upholds her. Now I can't see a bit of harm in it," said Miss Percy, "and it is really wonderful what he tells you. Did you ever have your palm read?"

Here was something new! Jane looked at her two pink palms and wondered.

Neither Angela nor Miss Goldie ever had, and Miss Percy continued exultingly, "Well, do you know, it was the most remarkable

thing, for he couldn't have known a thing about me, of course, but——" a wave of color swept over her face, "he actually told me—not plain out, but so I could understand, something that no one besides myself in this town knows. He said my palm was unusually interesting, and he'd like to study it."

"At the rate of a dollar a lesson, from you?" asked Angela.

"No, he offered to give me another reading for nothing. He said he saw the shadow of a great coming event in my palm. Now what do you suppose it could be? There seemed to be money in it, he said, and dear knows I'd be glad of a little. It startled me, for—I wouldn't say it to everybody—but here lately, I have begun to think seriously of Mr. Samm. He's queer, and I should like a name of two syllables at least, but he's good hearted, and he's had a raise. But," Miss Percy's emphasis was profound, "if the event he foresees is of a matrimonial nature, I might be making a fatal mistake, for looking at Mr. Samm in the most favorable light, he is not great, now, is he?" Miss Percy spoke earnestly, but there was a twinkle in her eye.

Angela owned he wasn't. "I am sure you are wise to wait," she said, laughing.

"He sings pretty well," Jane suggested.

"But isn't it rather hard on Mr. Samm?" Miss Goldie asked timidly.

"I guess he'll bear up under it," Miss Percy replied lightly. "There is no use letting sentiment blind you to actuality. You have to do the best you can for yourself. While it may be the best, it may not, so I say, 'Percy Marple, go slow.' There's another thing," she added—"do you know it struck me as ominous—no, that's not the word——"

Angela suggested "significant."

"Yes, thank you—as significant that a new man should apply today. To be sure he is only a surgeon's assistant, but surgeons make a lot of money when they are successful. Anyway, I am not going to set the day yet."

"What day?" Jane wanted to know.

"The day I take him," Miss Percy explained, laughing.

"Take him where?"

"Jane, darling, really——! If you don't look out you'll turn into a question mark," said Angela. "In this instance, 'take him' means 'marry him.'"

It seemed strange to Jane that when it was so easy to speak plainly, grown people should always prefer to be obscure.

CHAPTER XI

RATHER CLERICAL

THE mistake, which was soon discovered, would never have been made, Miss Percy pointed out, if the Assistant had worn clerical clothes. Naturally, in Sycamore Street "Dr. Brewer" meant the well-known surgeon of that name, who had his office on the block above St. Anne's, rather than the pastor of Kenton Place Church.

The Blind Man, who, during his wife's absence, was taking his meals with Mrs. Marple, reported that it was as good as a play to see Miss Percy making herself agreeable to the Assistant the first evening, and Mr. Samm as frosty as a December dawn!

Angela said she could imagine it.

"The young fellow was a good deal puzzled and embarrassed," continued the Blind Man. "Mrs. Marple asked him if he were

Dr. Penrose? and he told her 'Not yet,' and then looked cheap and added perhaps he'd never be. Then she asked about some operation on a child at St. Anne's, and it all came out. A pastor's assistant, instead of a surgeon's. Well, sir! Miss Percy and Mr. Samm changed places like that!" The Blind Man snapped his fingers to indicate the lightning change.

Jane, in her mind's eye, saw Miss Percy and Mr. Samm taking frantic possession of each other's chairs as in Pussy-wants-a-Corner.

"Something like it," Angela whispered, smilingly, in reply to her question.

"She draws the line at clergymen, you know, and he is correspondingly fond of them," Mr. Browne went on. "Our conversation at once took on a devout turn. Mrs. Marple spoke of the Sunday School Convention, and the minister who stayed with her, and Mr. Samm turned to literary themes, asking if Mr. Penrose was familiar with somebody's collection of poetry and song? Ha! Ha!"

Angela laughed, too, and said of course the leather case of clippings was brought out; but the Blind Man said no, he had left it in his other pocket, unfortunately.

"Little Susie looked very scornful of Mr. Samm—I'm afraid you are spoiling her, An-

gela—and said she didn't care for collections of poetry, and Mr. Penrose came in with something about anthologies having their place. For my part I can't see," concluded the Blind Man, "why he comes down here to live. I asked him if he thought we needed missionaries?"

Later on Susie came in, but she had very little to say about Mr. Penrose, giving the impression that she found him rather ordinary.

"I like what I have seen of him," Angela said, "though it does seem queer for the assistant at Kenton Place Church to be living here. Still, it is just for a while, to accommodate Mrs. Marple."

The new lodger was evidently a very busy person and came and went so quietly, Angela said she hardly knew she had a lodger. Jane, who was often at the gate, had several chats with him and knew about his little sister who was ten, and had a Maltese much like Mufti.

One evening a week or so after his coming, Miss Goldie remarked that she thought the young man was homesick.

"What makes you think so?" Angela asked.

"I saw him looking in at you and Jane as he passed the library door as if—well, as if——" Miss Goldie got no further.

Now Angela and Jane were sitting together in a great sleepy-hollow chair with a story book open before them.

"If he looks like that, something must be done about it," Angela said gravely. "Dear me, Miss Goldie, you are a most uncomfortable person! Am I my lodger's keeper? Do you think he'd like a fairy tale?"

In the end, Jane was sent to his door with an invitation to come down to the library if he felt like it. He must have felt like it, for he came quite promptly, and stayed till after her bedtime.

He showed her a picture of his little sister in the back of his watch, and talked about his home in a small New York town, and then, in reply to some questions from Angela, of the work he hoped to do. He said Kenton Place Church wanted to open a mission school which was to be his particular charge and he had been investigating fields. It seemed to him there was a very good one not far away.

Angela, who helped when she could at the settlement over in North Street and knew about conditions, thought so too.

The Assistant said he was surprised to learn of the relation between Kenton Place Church and the old church building next door. It

seemed a great pity for a good building like that to stand unused. Did Miss Hearn know who owned it now?

Some real estate company, Angela thought; the property had been sold, she understood, several years ago.

"But Angela," urged Jane, frowning, "you know what the stone says, and you said it meant it belonged to God."

"Yes, dear, it does, of course, in one sense. Never mind now."

"I wish you would tell me one thing," the Assistant said. "Who are the Kings? I hear them mentioned at every turn."

Angela smiled. She knew how this was, herself.

"Mrs. Brewer," he went on, "rather impressed it upon me that Miss King was to be consulted and her opinion deferred to. Perhaps I should not mention it, but I got the impression she feared Miss King might not approve of my living down here. I really didn't understand at all."

"Perhaps it is your being in my house she objects to," said Angela. "You see there was trouble at the time the church was moved to Kenton Place. My father led in the opposition to it. Miss King is a most important

person, I fancy, in the new church. Her father and mine were not friendly. That is all. It happened long ago when I was a child."

Mr. Penrose said, "Oh, I see," and looked embarrassed, and Angela changed the subject and asked how he liked it at Mrs. Marple's.

He was very well pleased, he answered. Mrs. Marple was kindness itself. He liked her niece, too, Miss Susie. She had such a sweet face. Miss Percy, it was plain, did not appeal to him. He asked some questions about that queer-looking man, Mr. Browne. It was foolish, he owned, but he felt as if he were laughing at him all the while.

Angela told him he mustn't mind the Blind Man, who laughed at everybody. Then going back to Mrs. Brewer, she said she supposed he had told her that the present arrangement was only temporary, till Mrs. Marple could accommodate him.

"Oh, is it?" said the Assistant, looking unhappy. "I thought perhaps——"

"Miss Percy told me she didn't think Mr. Green was going to leave after all," Miss Goldie put in, encouragingly.

When Mr. Penrose got up to go, he thanked Angela for asking him in. It was such a homelike room, he said. He noticed the sil-

ver bird that perched on Miss Goldie's table and held her seam in its bill. His grandmother had one. Jane, of course, must show him how by pressing its tail you released the work. She was very fond of doing it. Angela said that some time she must tell Mr. Penrose about the other birds, the cock and the owl.

The Assistant had mentioned a letter he must write. Jane found it on the hall table next morning and gave it to the postman with one of Angela's. She examined them both very closely and they seemed to her exactly alike. She mentioned it at the breakfast table.

"They may both have had blue stamps, but that was all probably," Angela said.

"But the name was the same, too, Angela," Jane insisted.

"But, Jane, darling, you can't read writing very well, you know."

"His writing is rather like yours, Angela," Miss Goldie said; "it's a sort of round backhand. He left a card with me to give to the express man who brought his things."

Jane stuck to it that they were just the same, and though the matter ended here it later on turned out that she knew a thing or two if she couldn't read writing.

CHAPTER XII

THE OWNER OF THE CHURCH AND OTHER MATTERS

In front of the Kings' one afternoon early in October, a brougham waited, and David, turning in at his gate, was made aware of a bright face bobbing up and down inside.

"Well, upon my word!" he exclaimed, "if it isn't Just Jane!"

Jane, all smiles, explained that she was with Cousin John, who had gone in to see the Princess. "That's what Miss Goldie and I call her," she added, seeing David looked surprised.

"Then I am a prince, I suppose," he said.

Jane shook her head.

"No? Why not? I shall have to see Miss Goldie about that."

"No," Jane insisted, "you are just a young man."

"Well, I'll try to be content so long as you are Just Jane."

From this beginning it is easy to guess how Jane came presently to be sitting on the marble balustrade above the garden, swinging her feet and talking about angels and other matters with David.

Cousin John had set up a carriage recently, with a very staid horse and a grizzled coachman, and went about making calls. Her eyes were bad and she needed both fresh air and diversion. Sometimes she invited Jane to accompany her, which Jane liked very much to do. She observed the letter of Angela's instructions never to ask Cousin John to take her, but was careful to make herself rather prominent whenever there were signs that a drive was in prospect.

"You wait here, Jane," the old lady had said today. "I shall not be long." But the fact that she had been pretty long, seemed to abrogate her command, and Jane felt no hesitation in accepting David's invitation to come in and sit on the gallery with him in the October sunshine.

"And you really saw an angel?"

"Yes, it came to take grandfather to heaven."

"What did it look like?"

"Why, like an angel, don't you know? All white and lovely colors, and lilies."

"I am sorry to say I never saw one. Did it come in at the front door?"

"Now you are making fun," Jane said severely.

"No, indeed, it is just that I don't know anything about angels and their habits."

"Well—" Jane had the air of conceding something to his ignorance—"they don't come, they are just there. Angels are like fairies, only bigger. Do you believe in fairies? The Blind Man doesn't, but Angela says we mustn't expect too much of him."

"Does Angela believe in fairies?" David rather lingered over the name.

"Oh, yes, only she hasn't much time. The books are beginning to come in very fast. We've lots to do between now and Christmas," Jane sighed with lifted brows.

"What do you and Angela do with books?"

"She writes things about them for the paper, and I 'R' them, and then the boy comes and takes them away in a bag. He is a saucy boy."

"She reviews, I suppose," said David, and something caused him to knit his brows.

"You are frowning," said Jane, putting a

small finger upon the vertical wrinkles between his eyes.

"Very ill-bred, in your presence, Just Jane! But tell me, does Angela ever scold? Say severe and cutting things?"

Jane nodded emphatically. "Yes, she says, 'Jane, darling, you are such a bother, I wish you'd go away.'"

"Dreadful! How do you stand it?" David asked, laughing.

From the drawing-room window, which was open, came the sound of polite conversation. When David and Jane entered, they found a handsome person, with fluffy gray hair and a good deal of manner chatting with Lucia and Cousin John, but Jane had eyes at first only for the Princess, who looked more delicately lovely than ever in her soft, black gown.

David shook hands with Cousin John and the stranger, calling the latter Mrs. Brewer. Lucia drew Jane to her side.

"And who is this charming little girl?" Mrs. Brewer wished to know.

Jane, nestling against Lucia, looked at her steadily without speaking.

"Why don't you answer, Jane?" said Cousin John.

"She is Just Jane," David explained.

"Jane Porterfield——" prompted Lucia, and Jane added "West."

"West?" Mrs. Brewer looked from Lucia to Cousin John. "Is it a name I ought to know?"

Now it is queer, but the Wise and Prudent are often more particular as to their duty in a matter like this than in almost any other.

"There is no ought about it. She is a little cousin of mine," Mrs. Clay answered bluntly, and as if she were a trifle bored by Mrs. Brewer.

This seemed to establish satisfactorily her claim to notice and the lady went on to inquire where she lived.

Jane told her on Sycamore Street, and David, who seemed amused, added, "next to the old church."

Mrs. Brewer's brows lifted. "Ah, indeed! Near St. Anne's. Our assistant, Mr. Penrose, boards in that neighborhood. If he had consulted me, I should have advised—— However, that is neither here nor there. By the way, who owns that church?"

Jane spoke promptly. "It's mine—and God's."

"Jane! what did Angela tell you?" asked Cousin John, sternly.

Really, Jane had not meant to say it. It just would out, but this being the case she would stick to it. "Grandfather said so, and Uncle Amos said, 'Yes, brother,'" she insisted; then feeling it might be wise to change the subject, she looked at David; "May I see some picture books, please?"

As he led her across the room Cousin John was explaining. "The child has the notion so firmly fixed in her head you can't get it out. Her grandfather, Mr. Hearn, felt very deeply the removal of the church, and that Jane had some right to the property became an obsession with him as his mind failed. Yes, her mother was Ellie Hearn. Ellie married, very young, her second cousin, Porterfield West, who was the great grandson and only living descendant of old Jane Porterfield who gave the ground. There was a clause in the deed by which it was to revert to her heirs whenever it ceased to be used for church purposes. Ellie died when Jane was a baby and Porterfield a year later."

"But the clause you speak of was ambiguous, was it not?" Lucia's soft voice questioned. "Mr. Randall was explaining it to me the other

day. The Court decided that, so long as the value of the land continued to be invested in church property——"

At sight of a beautiful *Alice In Wonderland,* Jane paid no further heed to the conversation on the other side of the room. She and David found a great deal to say about Alice and agreed perfectly; in fact, their friendship became more firmly established than ever. They had about exhausted the subject for the time being, when a small dove-colored volume on the table caught Jane's eye.

"We had this," she said, taking it up.

"You had?"

"Yes, Angela didn't like it much, but Miss Goldie said it was pretty, and not to hurt his feelings. Do you like it?"

David owned he had thought it rather nice when he first saw it.

"I like blue books best," Jane remarked, adding, "do you ever get pears and poetry mixed?"

David replied he never had thus far. "Why?"

"I do," Jane continued, turning a leaf. "The other day Angela said, 'Jane, darling'—that's what she calls me, you know—'hand me Bartlett;' and I thought she meant one of the pears Uncle Amos brought. Wasn't that funny?"

"You're rich," said David, laughing.

"No, we aren't; we are rather poor, Angela says, but Miss Goldie says not to talk about it, for it frightens the fairies away."

"Jane," interrupted Cousin John, "it is time we were going. Well, Mr. David, what are you doing with yourself? Writing poetry and coming to the rescue of persecuted damsels? You might do worse."

Jane, slipping quietly into the library in search of Miss Goldie's scissors the next afternoon, heard the Blind Man and Cousin John talking.

"Didn't I tell you that Carter King owned it?" the Blind Man was exclaiming.

"You may have hinted at it in your oracular manner," Cousin John replied; "but you didn't know. It was merely a guess. Carter, it seems, to help the Kenton Place Church out of difficulties, bought it from them a few years ago, under the cover of a real estate company. His family knew nothing of it till after his death, I understand. Lucia says Peyton Randall advises her to improve the property at once; to put up an apartment and office building. She is all business; her father over again, and the will gives her a free hand, but David's share is in trust till he is thirty or more. By

the way, Jane quite embarrassed Lucia yesterday by her claim. Oh, are you there, Jane? I didn't see you," said Cousin John.

Jane explained about the scissors and withdrew. She had promised Angela not to say the church was hers and she felt a little guilty.

"You know, Jane, darling," Angela told her at going-to-bed time, "you must be reasonable. I'll forgive you this once, as you are sure you forgot, but it annoys me dreadfully to have you say the church belongs to you. Grandfather was ill, and when people are ill they sometimes get things wrong. We know now that it really belongs to Miss Lucia King."

This surprised Jane very much. She thought about it in silence for a while. "Does the fairy belong to her, too?" she asked.

"Fairies don't belong to anybody," said Miss Goldie.

"But if you make places for them they will stay," Jane added, nodding her head most emphatically. She was sure of this, and in spite of all Angela could say, she retained an impression that the ownership of the church was open to argument. For this the Blind Man may have been responsible.

CHAPTER XIII

FIGURES OF SPEECH

"PSHAW!" said Bernard, disdainfully, "ladies don't blow horns,—only men."

"They do, too, Cousin John said so," Jane declared stoutly.

Prone on his stomach, Bernard was turning the leaves of the Battle Book. His insatiable appetite for this illustrated History of the Civil War, was one of Jane's grievances. As hostess, she could not withhold it when it was demanded of her, but in consequence of this sanguinary taste, and the masculine superiority with which her opinions were invariably treated, his society, though eagerly sought, quickly palled upon her.

"I bet you never saw one doing it," Bernard continued after some moments absorption in a particularly ghastly scene.

Jane sat back on her heels; "Yes, I have;

or, anyway, I saw a lady who blows one, the other day. She does it gracefully, Cousin John said."

Bernard seemed impressed by this. "Is it a trumpet like the drugstore man's?" he asked.

Jane didn't know, and had to own it.

"Well, I bet she can't march along the street like this:—toot! toot! toot!" Scrambling to his feet Bernard gave a realistic performance with two grimy fists lifted, in lieu of a horn.

Jane couldn't quite picture Mrs. Brewer, who was the lady Cousin John had mentioned, holding aloft a shining horn and marching down the street. "I guess she plays it in the house," she conceded.

Bernard returned to his battles. "I guess she doesn't play it at all," he remarked, sceptically.

Jane determined to question Cousin John at her earliest opportunity. "No one blows her own horn with more grace than Mrs. Brewer," these had been her very words, as she talked to Angela. There was a little girl named Laura who sometimes brought her violin and played for Cousin John; Jane's impression was that in like manner Mrs. Brewer had on some occasion brought her horn.

Several days passed before the desired opportunity offered; then one afternoon Angela sent her over with the *Illustrated Weekly* to show Cousin John the pictures.

Jane liked to go to St. Anne's by herself. She liked to hear the swinging door go "swish" behind her, and the voice of the Sister in the office saying, "Why, there's Jane!"

"How do you do, Sister?" she would reply. "Is everybody getting well?" and then walk very sedately along the corridor to Cousin John's door.

It was rather an odd coincidence that just as she had spread out the paper on a small stand before Mrs. Clay, and kneeling on a chair was preparing to act as showman, Mrs. Brewer should be shown in, but Jane had for the moment forgotten her argument with Bernard, and even the appearance of the lady failed at first to remind her.

Mrs. Brewer was a voluminously elegant person, many interesting details going to make up her impressive whole, and when Jane had been graciously recognized with, "Why, this is Jane, isn't it?" and had bobbed politely and given her hand, she climbed back on her chair and became absorbed in contemplation. She wrinkled her nose at the faint perfume wafted

to her by the visitor's fan, while her eyes traveled from the curling gray plumes to the shopping bag, and the lorgnette on its jeweled chain, and finally to the lustrous fur of the muff in her lap. This was so softly enticing, Jane reached out an investigating finger tip.

Mrs. Brewer detected it and smiled affably. Suddenly, Jane remembered. "Did you bring your horn?" she asked, interrupting Cousin John in the middle of a sentence.

Mrs. Brewer looked surprised and puzzled. "My horn? What do you mean, my dear? A trumpet? I am not deaf."

"I mean the one you play on—the one you blow, don't you know?" Jane illustrated even as Bernard had, with two small fists placed together at her lips.

Mrs. Brewer looked at Cousin John. "How very amusing! But I assure you I haven't any horn."

"Cousin John said you had—that you played it gracefully."

"Jane!" Cousin John spoke sternly. "You may know what you are talking about, but no one else does. Suppose you run along now, we'll look at the pictures another time."

It was an understood thing that she was to come away at once when Cousin John sug-

gested it. Angela was very positive about this, so Jane, puzzled, but obedient, said good-bye. Cousin John must have a very bad memory, indeed, if she had forgotten about the horn, she thought.

Angela, busy at her typewriter, only half attended to Jane's story. "What is it about Mrs. Brewer?" she asked, as she paused to slip in a fresh page and rearrange her notes. "A horn! what do you mean?" Then suddenly she leaned back in her chair, dropping her hands in her lap. "Jane Porterfield West! what will you say next?"

"But Cousin John did say it, Angela. Why is it funny? Why was she so mad at me?" Jane was half tearful.

"Listen to me, Jane darling, it was a figure of speech. Cousin John only meant that Mrs. Brewer sometimes talked about herself in a rather impressive way, and naturally she didn't care to have it repeated." Angela laughed a good deal while she was making her explanation.

Jane, attending closely, found the phrase "a figure of speech," most fascinating. After Angela returned to work she repeated it over and over as she rocked back and forth in her small chair to the music of the typewriter.

When Cousin John dropped in the next afternoon, she was no longer mad. Mrs. Brewer hadn't taken it in, she told Angela. Fortunately, she was not very acute. "But you needn't tell her so the first chance you get, Jane," she added.

Jane very earnestly assured her she wouldn't. She understood now about figures of speech.

"She is too much with grown-ups," Angela said, over her head; "but how can I help it?"

Perhaps this was one reason why she did not object very positively when Miss Goldie proposed taking Jane to Sunday School at the Kenton Place Church. Mrs. Brewer had stopped them on the street and invited Jane to the new primary class, urging Miss Goldie to bring her. They were trying to increase the attendance.

It was Mr. Penrose's Sunday School, too, and Jane wished to go; so, although Angela thought it was too far, and didn't care for the Kenton Place Church, she gave in without much urging.

As luck would have it, the wonderful new primary teacher was ill that Sunday. Mrs. Brewer, who took her place at the last mo-

ment, explained this with deep regret and such careful emphasis on the word *ill,* that the little girl next Jane was moved to repeat it in a giggling whisper. Miss Goldie, from her seat at one side, shook her head at Jane, who had only smiled to be sociable.

Mrs. Brewer knew she could not take Miss Rollo's place, but she would do her best, and would begin with a story. Jane had once in an expansive moment told Bernard that she knew all the Bible stories there were, but this one, as it turned out, she had never heard before.

It was about a man who was saying his prayers on the roof, who saw a sheet let down from heaven by the four corners, filled with all kinds of beasts and birds.

"Bears and lions, and elephants and kangaroos," one of the small boys began to enumerate aloud. Mrs. Brewer said, no doubt, all those and others.

This picture so engrossed Jane that she failed to grasp the story, but so far as she understood it the climax was disappointing. With so many tragic possibilities in view, it seemed strange that nothing interesting happened.

After this Mrs. Brewer called for the golden

text, and as no one seemed to know it, she taught it to them, making them repeat it after her again and again. Then a bell rang and they marched into the big Sunday School room and took their seats on the front row and from there Jane smiled up at Roger Penrose, who stood by the reading desk on the platform. Behind him sat a visitor whom he introduced a little later, asking him to say a few words to the school.

He was a sensible visitor, for his words were actually few, and he ended by asking if any of the little people on the front row could recite the text for the day. He looked straight at Jane, and as no one else responded, she stood up and said, very fast, indeed, "Of a truth I perceive God is *not* a respectable person," and sat down, feeling as Laurine would say, a little flustered.

But something was wrong! Miss Goldie looked shocked, and some other people were laughing. The visitor, with a very, very grave face, said they were all much obliged to Jane for trying, but she had not quite understood; then he repeated it himself and tried to explain what "God is no respector of persons," meant.

It was really very mortifying. "Who was

that little girl?" was asked on all sides when they were dismissed. Jane decided she wouldn't go to Sunday School any more, and hung her head and didn't want to speak to people and was altogether unlike herself.

"You didn't use your mind now, did you, Jane, darling?" Angela said with great seriousness, making at the same time a noticeable effort to control a slight unsteadiness of voice. Was she really very much annoyed, or was she trying not to laugh? Jane could not tell, so resting her chin on the edge of the table she gazed across it at Angela with wide-open brown eyes waiting for a cue. This was, of course, when she was safe at home once more.

"For mercy sake! You look as if you had been decapitated! Come out where I can see all of you," Angela exclaimed, and certainly she was smiling now; "I much prefer a whole Jane, absurd as she is."

Jane, reassured, promptly obeyed, and wanted to know the meaning of that funny word.

Angela explained, adding, "but a head is not much good if you do not use it, Jane darling, which brings us back to what I was saying: you shouldn't repeat words without thinking what they mean."

"But Angela, it sounded like that, and when I *do* think, you say they are figures of speech," Jane urged.

Then, of course, Angela laughed and hugged her and said, "Jane, darling, you *are* such a goose, but you do use your small head-piece a little after all, so I suppose you will come out all right."

Jane, returning the embrace ardently, felt relieved.

"It would have been different if the regular teacher had been there," Roger Penrose remarked when the matter was referred to later, in his presence.

"But she was '*eel*' Mrs. Brewer said," quoted Jane. "What does *eel* mean?"

CHAPTER XIV

DAVID MAKES FRIENDS

"WHAT does 'cutting out' mean, Angela?" Jane questioned, laying on the table the fashion magazine she had been sent to borrow from Mrs. Marple. "Not patterns or scissors," she explained.

"It's just an expression, Pussy, like 'Getting ahead of.'"

"Miss Percy said you were doing it to Susie, and Susie said you weren't, thank you, and Mrs. Marple said not to mind, Miss Percy was teasing; and Miss Percy said she saw you and a certain person out walking yesterday and she knew the signs. What signs, Angela? And who is a certain person?" Jane paused for breath. She was perfectly aware that the phrase, "a certain person," had been used because of her presence. Grown people constantly placed such obstacles in the path

of understanding. It merely whetted her determination to know.

She was surprised to see Angela's cheeks grow pink with indignation, much as Susie's had.

"Jane, listen to me. Miss Percy is very, very silly. She likes to tease, as Mrs. Marple said. I am not cutting Susie out, or anyone else."

"But who did you go walking with?"

"I went to see old Norah, as you know. I didn't go walking with anybody. Now don't ask any more questions. I am annoyed with Miss Percy."

It did not occur to Jane that Angela might have met somebody, and she realized nothing was to be gained by pursuing the subject at this time, but as most things come to those who wait with their wits about them, she learned later on that a certain person was another name for her friend David King. In her satisfaction over this discovery she forgot the cutting out.

David had been in Sycamore Street rather often of late. When you stopped to think of it, really you met him at every turn, but it was so pleasant to meet David you didn't think of it except to be pleased.

There was that afternoon at Cousin John's to begin with. Angela was in the habit of reading to her on Thursdays, and on this occasion, Miss Goldie being out and Laurine very busy, Jane and her paper dolls went along. At the very moment when Cousin John was announcing frankly that she thought the book Angela had brought, rather stupid, Sister Mary Baptist brought in a card.

"David King," said the old lady. "Show him in. And you needn't go, Angela, for he'll not stay more than a minute."

He stayed rather longer than that, as it happened, and made himself most agreeable. He joked with Cousin John, was very polite to Angela and the best of friends with Jane, who sat on the window-sill with her dolls.

While he talked to Cousin John, Angela took the opportunity to restore order to a table crowded with books and magazines. If she had tried to show her profile to the best advantage, and those slender, capable hands of hers, she could not have chosen a better way. David's eyes certainly showed an inclination to turn in that direction.

Cousin Jane was pleased with his call. "He is a thousand times more attractive than Lucia," she said, when he left. "By good

rights he should be dreadfully spoiled. I am told the girls are wild about him, quote his verses and pay open court to him."

On a stormy afternoon not long after this, Laurine opened the library door to ask if Miss Angela could tell when Mr. Penrose would be in? A gentleman wished to know.

Angela wasn't certain, and followed by Jane, went to the hall to speak to the gentleman, who proved to be David King again. Jane was, of course, delighted to see him, and if Angela was not, she concealed it. She had an impression that Roger had said he would be back in an hour and that was some time ago. Wouldn't Mr. King come in and wait?

David accepted the invitation, hoping he was not intruding and interrupting, for the workshop character of the room was apparent. Angela's table was piled high with books and papers, Miss Goldie was busy with her sewing, and Jane had her playthings in the bay window.

A fire burned contentedly in the old-fashioned grate, and David, at sight of it, quoted:

> "'Sing a song of seasons
> Something bright in all;
> Flowers in the summer,
> Fires in the fall.'

"After the dreary outside world, this looks pleasant," he added, shaking hands with Miss Goldie. He went on to explain that he had been browsing in the library of old Captain McKenzie in North Street, and talking with him of pioneer days.

Jane must have the verse repeated, and the meaning of pioneer explained, and while she thought it over, David told Angela he had just finished some verses on the passing of the corner pump, by way of following her advice.

Angela replied she hoped he did not take her criticisms too seriously.

"I own I felt a little sore over it last spring, but I begin to realize you were right, only——" he laughed, "you needn't have called it a pretty book."

Miss Goldie dropped her work on her lap and looked dreadfully frightened. "It was I who said that," she stammered. "I begged Angela to put it in. I thought it was a nice thing to say."

At this Angela and David both laughed, and the latter said, "If you meant it as a compliment, Miss Goldie, I accept it as one, but your confession doesn't exonerate Miss Hearn."

Angela defended herself and the argument presently became so extremely bookish that Jane grew bored and went to hunt Mufti. She chased him all the way to the third floor and down again, and felt better for the exercise, though Mufti finally escaped her.

Peeping in at the library door, she saw Angela with her elbows on the table making diagrams in the air with her pencil and talking animatedly, while David rumpled his hair and tried to interrupt.

Jane returned to her chase; lying flat on her stomach she tried to pull Mufti out from beneath the bookcase. When once more she gave it up and returned to the library, Miss Goldie had left and the conversation had changed. David was saying, earnestly, "The last thing I desire is to annoy you, and if my coming here occasionally would do that, I will not ask you to allow it. Indeed, I ought to wait to be asked, I know—but I want you to understand how I feel—that things which are past and gone should not be allowed to darken our paths, and it will darken mine if I am not permitted to be friends with you."

Angela smiled. "I suppose," she said, "I feel differently for the reason that I have

known more about it all along. Not, of course," she turned to him with a bright glance, "that we must be enemies in any sense, but——"

"Then it is only a step farther to say, be friends," David urged. "I'll own," he added, "that the church business seems to me a beastly shame, though I know my father and a lot of others looked at it differently, and were, no doubt, honest in it."

"Pray do not think for a moment," Angela interrupted, "because of what Jane says, that I feel we have the remotest claim on the property. That would be absurd. My father's mind was not clear the last few years of his life, and one of his fancies was that the church belonged to her. I shall be glad when it is gone and we can forget it."

"I won't say it any more, Angela, truly I won't," Jane announced, going to her side, and speaking earnestly.

"Jane's for me, I am sure," David said, smiling at her. "You are willing to be friends, aren't you?"

She was, indeed, willing, she made no attempt to conceal her liking for David, nor did Miss Goldie, which was more remarkable. And it was of no use to oppose him, for by

hook or by crook David was certain to have his way. Sheer luck attended him.

Cousin John told Angela not to be narrow-minded. "Let bygones be bygones," she said. "Be friends with him. It will be real missionary work to keep him away from that Rankin set I hear so much about."

Angela said she didn't aspire to be a missionary, but David was a nice boy with real talent and, of course, if he wanted to come in occasionally and talk shop, she would not object.

In this connection it would be interesting to know how Susie felt about Miss Percy's teasing. Had she actually built a foolish little castle? Well, who hasn't at some time or other? If she felt vaguely hurt and envious, it probably was because of a longing for a different world than the one she lived in every day; a desire to know things about literature and art, to have lovely, easy manners. Angela, one couldn't help seeing, belonged to this world of culture and privilege for all her hard work, and Susie didn't, quite. This, no doubt, explains it, when you put two and two together. However it was, Angela and Miss Goldie both remarked that Susie didn't run in so often after dinner these days.

One evening when Jane and Miss Goldie were the only ones at home, Angela being at the settlement, Susie came over to return a book she had borrowed. Miss Goldie asked if she liked it.

"No," Susie replied, and added in a fierce way, as if she could not help saying it, "I suppose I am a perfect dunce, for I don't understand it." Actually, there were tears in her eyes.

Miss Goldie tried to be encouraging. There were lots of Angela's books she did not understand. Maybe Susie would find something she liked better, in the bookcase.

At this moment Roger Penrose came in to consult "Who's Who" for an address, and wanted to know if anything was the matter.

"Susie says she is a dunce," Jane told him promptly, causing Susie to turn very red.

"She must be fishing," Roger declared, laughing.

"Are you, Susie?" Jane asked, much interested.

"No, I am not fishing," Susie said seriously. "I have read this play," she held up another book, "and I don't know any more about it now—that is not much—than I did before.

And I have read what this man says about it," pointing to the volume she had returned, "and I don't know where he finds what he says is there, and I don't—I don't even understand his *words!*" she concluded fiercely,—"not any more than Jane would."

"Well, but see here, this is a queer, mystical, symbolic sort of thing anyhow, isn't it? I haven't read it."

"Haven't you?" Susie's tone was less tragic. "But I heard Angela and Mr. King discussing it the other night, for ever so long, and—well—it never occurred to me before that I was really dull. I thought I just wasn't educated enough. I didn't think that I actually couldn't understand the English language."

"Why, that is a common enough experience. There are scientific books, things on, say metaphysics, or technical studies, which for any meaning they may have except to the special student might as well be written in Sanskrit."

"Do you think even Angela wouldn't understand them?"

Roger laughed. "Ask her," he said.

"Anyway, that is different. I ought to be able to understand a play."

"Well, I don't know, Perhaps you make a

mistake in beginning with Ibsen," Roger suggested.

Susie grew more cheerful as the conversation proceeded and when she left, Roger walked home with her.

"He is a very nice, kind young man," Miss Goldie remarked to Jane.

"But I like David best," Jane said.

"Oh, well, yes," answered Miss Goldie.

Not long after this Roger gave Susie a small leather-bound copy of "As You Like It."

CHAPTER XIV

THAT QUEER CORNER

MISS KING had given him a handsome check for his mission school, Roger Penrose told Angela.

Jane wanted to see it. She knew what checks were like, for Angela occasionally received one, and sometimes wrote them herself, but the Assistant's adjective suggested something unusually ornamental. She was disappointed when Miss Goldie whispered that he only meant it was for quite a good deal of money.

Roger agreed with Miss Goldie and Jane about the Princess. It was plain he was rather carried away by her beauty and grace. He was sure, he said, that she felt the responsibility of her wealth deeply. She had asked his advice in regard to certain gifts she meant to make. Mrs. Brewer told him she was overwhelmed with applications for help.

The more Roger investigated, the larger the field for his proposed work seemed to grow. He hoped, some day, he said, to get his courage up to the point of suggesting to Miss King what a grand thing it would be if the old church could be given back to the neighborhood as a mission church.

Angela shook her head and advised him not to build his castles too high. Miss King, she heard, had other plans.

Dr. Brewer had said the same thing, and the Assistant owned it was looking rather far ahead when as yet he had only thirty or forty children in his school.

That Lucia was really making plans was proved beyond dispute one November day, when Jane came bursting in upon Miss Goldie, crying, "The church is open! the church is open! Maybe it's a wedding. Let's go, Miss Goldie."

"They are only airing it, I guess, Jane," she said, putting down her work, nevertheless, and going to the front door. Roger Penrose, who came in the gate at that moment, said it had been open all morning.

"Let's go in. Please, can't we, Miss Goldie," Jane begged, looking from her to the Assistant.

"Why not?" said he. "It can't do any harm, but you must wrap up, it will be chilly."

"I remember going to a wedding here once," Miss Goldie remarked, as Roger held the gate open for them to enter. She had put on her coat and hat and carried her gloves for looks.

"You didn't attend church here then?"

"No, I have always gone to the cathedral," she replied with an air of gentle importance.

"Is there going to be a wedding?" asked Jane. But even her chatter ceased as they crossed the threshold and stood in the dismantled, desolate place, which in its best days had possessed little beauty but that of good proportions, and was now utterly dreary.

The windows of grayish glass, beneath a drapery of dust, only added to the dreariness. The air was heavy. You felt, Roger said, as they walked up the broad central aisle, the weight of the past with all its varied memories. This sounded well, and served to explain that something which oppressed even Jane, who gazed about in an awed silence.

It was such an echoing place, they spoke softly, and felt like intruders.

Miss Goldie began to recall the wedding; how the church had been decorated, and what the bride wore. She took her seat in the front

pew where the bride's mother sat, and told Jane about the little flower girls, who, it was strange to think, must now be grown up, and were, perhaps, married themselves. The thought of these old days was beginning to make Miss Goldie sad, and Jane was frowning in disappointment that there was to be no wedding today, when they were caught in the act by the Princess. They weren't doing anything wrong, but this is how they felt when Lucia, accompanied by a young man, came in.

"Come, Jane, we must go," whispered Miss Goldie, moving towards a side aisle, and the Assistant looked as if he, too, would have liked to escape, but you can't run away from a lady who has recently given you a handsome check, so instead, he advanced bravely to meet her, closely followed by Jane who ignored Miss Goldie.

Lucia seemed mildly surprised to see Mr. Penrose, but paid no attention to his explanations. Her companion, whom she introduced, proved to be an architect. To Jane, she held out her hand, saying, "I didn't expect to see you here. When I was a little girl I came here to church. How dingy and strange it looks now!" She shivered as she spoke.

"When were you a little girl?" asked Jane.

"Oh, ever so long ago," Lucia smilingly replied, and Roger tried to say something about its having been just the other day, but the architect got ahead of him.

Near the pulpit on either side, were two windows of plain glass. Lucia pointed these out; they had been memorial windows, she said. "The one on the left is now in our church, next the choir, you remember," appealing to the Assistant. "I do not know what has become of the other," she added, "I think it was the Angel of the Resurrection."

Jane saw Miss Goldie beckoning to her, but she had no idea of going till she found out what Miss King was going to do. She and Roger were still talking and the architect had moved away and was pacing off space and tapping walls, when another person appeared, watch in hand and most apologetic. Jane at once remembered she had seen him in the cemetery with Lucia, and that Miss Goldie did not like him.

Jane had not cared for him herself, though she didn't know why. He seemed a very imposing and civil gentleman as he stood talking to Miss King and Mr. Penrose. They talked about the church; Lucia explained how much

she deplored the past trouble and ill-feeling and Mr. Randall said the sooner it disappeared the sooner all that would be forgotten.

The architect joined them and began to compute the value of the wreckage and so on; Jane couldn't understand half of it but she grasped the main idea perfectly.

Nobody noticed her, though her eyes were growing bigger and bigger, her breath beginning to come in gasps. Up to this time we have seen Jane for the most part in holiday humor, which was in truth the prevailing one with her; but it has to be owned sooner or later that when her feelings were hurt she had a very objectionable habit of lifting her voice in what was almost a howl. So now her swelling woe broke bounds, and a wail arose which startled everybody.

With her arms held tightly across her eyes, she was blind as well as deaf to all attempts at consolation. Miss Goldie, hurrying forward, was as helpless as the rest. Coaxing, petting, expostulation, were alike in vain. The wail continued to wake fearful echoes in the old church. There was nothing for it but to lead her forth.

The embarrassed procession reached the door just as Angela, returning from the office,

reached the gate. She had recognized the wail from afar.

"Jane—why, Jane!" she called, and her voice when she knelt on the step and drew Jane close, had the effect of subduing her cries which died away into sobs, amid which could be distinguished something like, "They are going to tear it down. Don't let them."

It was something to see—Angela comforting Jane—to hear her tender laughter that made light, but not too light of the moment's tragedy. "Such a silly little Jane!" was what she said, but with her arms around you, her lips touching your brow, you did not mind the words.

The keen air had given Angela color today, and as she rose and stood, her arm still holding Jane fast, that tender half-amused light in her eyes, she was lovely to look upon. It was worth while, too, to see Lucia, so exquisitely all she ought to be, recalling their childish acquaintance, expressing solicitude for Jane. But was she, perhaps, a trifle condescending?

Angela remembered, smiling gravely, still holding Jane close. She thanked Lucia, and was sorry Jane had been so naughty; but not Lucia herself could have been more aloof.

"They are going to spoil the fairy's house,

Angela, that is what I mind," Jane explained later in a subdued and pensive manner.

"You see they don't know about the fairy and I fear we couldn't convince them," Angela said.

"I suppose Lucia doesn't know about the Ogre either. That he is an ogre, I mean," added Miss Goldie.

"It is very complicated," Angela replied. "He probably doesn't even know himself he is an ogre, for, not believing in ogres, how can he?"

The conversation, though obscure, was interesting.

It did look that day as if both Roger's castle and the fairy's house were doomed to be demolished. Yet that was a queer corner.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BLIND MAN GOES TO CHURCH

THE Blind Man went to church one Sunday. That this should have excited surprise is regrettable, and that he should so openly acknowledge curiosity as his motive is disappointing, still Mrs. Marple may have been right in her opinion that it was better to go from an unworthy motive than not to go at all.

Cousin John was sitting with Angela before the library fire that afternoon, and Jane, at the table, putting a picture puzzle together, when he came in.

"Well, sir!" he exclaimed, "you may call it courage, or nerve, or rushing in where angels fear to tread, but anyhow he waked 'em up."

"What in the world are you talking about, Alpheus?" asked Cousin John.

The Blind Man continued to chuckle.

"I believe he has been to church," said Angela.

"Well, do stop laughing and tell us about it. Who preached?" urged the old lady.

"None other than our modest young friend, Roger Penrose. Dr. Brewer it seems is ill. At the last minute he had to call on the Assistant. I got wind of it and went, and I was repaid."

"I trust it did you good," Cousin John murmured.

"I assure you it did. He smote the Aloofers hip and thigh. Mark my words, he'll be out of a job before many moons."

"Nonsense, Alpheus, what did he say? Surely the young man has sense enough——"

"Oh, he has sense, but in handling Aloofers great tact is what you need. Pat 'em on the back, make 'em feel good, then you'll get a good collection."

"For one who seldom goes to church you seem to know a lot about it," Cousin John remarked.

"I see Dr. Brewer's sermons in the paper, and have long been a humble admirer of his methods. I wonder if they'll print Roger's?"

Angela wanted to know the text, and the Blind Man said, "Let me see: I think it was,

'Not by might, nor by power——' isn't that it?"

It had been Jane's golden text only the week before so she finished it, looking up from her puzzle: "'But by My spirit, saith the Lord.'"

"Thank you, that's it. Well, he began by saying—— But I should say first that he had a fine congregation. In fact, almost no one had heard of Dr. Brewer's illness, and you could feel the wave of surprise that passed over the assembly when he appeared in the pulpit, but he went through the service quite admirably and made a good impression. However, the sermon, of course, was the test.

"He said there had never been an age, probably, when confidence in human might and power was more profound. He pointed out, among other things, that not by money, nor by applying business sagacity and worldly wisdom to its management, could the church become in the highest sense a success. The church must have money, he said, but it was the least thing, not the greatest. Generous contributions without the spirit of God were of small value.

"'Are you giving your best things to God?' he asked. Perhaps it was easier for some to

write a large check for missions, he suggested, than to be courteous and thoughtful where their clerks and servants were concerned; easier to put fifty or a hundred dollars in the plate than to allow a stenographer a needed holiday. To give money made us important, while the returns from sympathy and kindness, and personal service, though far more precious, were less conspicuous. If you had money it was a shame to you if you did not give, but unless you were giving yourself, you were falling sadly short.

"He spoke in a deliberate, hesitating manner, which caused every word to tell, too, and he was brief. They could not help listening."

"It sounds very good and true to me," Angela observed.

"But I fear it was casting pearls before swine," Cousin John added. "And, after all, what business had he——?"

"They'll turn again and rend him all right," the Blind Man chuckled.

"Well, I can tell you, Alpheus, the lines of a young minister fall in hard places nowadays. Reverence for the cloth is a thing of the past, and he has to occupy the position of teaching his grandmother, unsupported by the divinity that used to hedge a clergyman."

"I bet you they ship him," said Mr. Browne.

A good many persons still remember the Assistant's first and only sermon in Kenton Place Church and Lucia King is one of these. He never preached it again, and before he went to his western field he burned it with a lot of old papers.

He feared he had not preached it in the right spirit, he confessed humbly. He had become irritated over the constant emphasis upon the material side, and perplexed by the difficulty of finding workers for his school. Its only result, he told Angela, was a smaller collection than usual for foreign missions (it chanced to be foreign mission Sunday), and Miss King's evident displeasure.

No doubt he was wrong about results, nor was the Blind Man right when he prophesied he would be shipped. Dr. Brewer's physician insisted upon a six months' rest in a milder climate, which his adoring congregation readily granted, and it is likely the doctor, himself, put in a plea for the Assistant, who was proving invaluable in the Sunday School and had made a fine beginning in his mission work, down town.

So he remained for the present, and the Seminary Professors were called on to

preach. They could be depended upon for safe doctrinal discourses that hurt no feelings; or to refute German critics whom none of their hearers read.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COCK AND THE HORSE

THERE were other Janes in the world, as well as other weather vanes, and other hospitals conducted upon much the same lines as St. Anne's; but it was finding them all in conjunction which aroused curiosity, not to say suspicion.

Jane and Miss Goldie held that Angela knew more about that innocent looking book than she would own, and this in the face of her assertion that she had never heard of it till she saw it among a host of others on her table. It was a little odd she should smile as she did over the accusation.

"Dedicated to Jane and the Fairies," continued Miss Goldie. "Are you sure you didn't write it yourself? You like it, don't you?"

"Did you, Angela, and am I the Jane?" asked the owner of that name.

"Yes, I like it, and I am as puzzled as I can be," Angela replied, throwing her head back and smiling at the ceiling in a manner which caused Miss Goldie to say again, "You do know something, and you just won't tell."

Hunting among her papers, Angela presently produced one of those slips sent out by publishers to assist the reviewer, or to guide him into right paths, and read it aloud. This stated that the author was a well-known writer upon scientific subjects, who in this departure from his customary vein chose to remain anonymous, and so on. Nothing more could be got from Angela. Later on a copy arrived by mail with the compliments of the publishers, which certainly looked as if they had reason to think she would be particularly interested.

Everybody who knows the Blind Man has heard how he was tricked into reading *The Cock and the Horse*. He has told it himself many times. Mrs. Browne has given her version also, and Jane has her own reason for remembering the affair. To an unprejudiced mind, quick to note how curiously things happen, it is plain the fairies must have been concerned in it.

It was a blustery evening, so the Blind Man

relates, and he had settled himself in his Morris chair before the fire, with his pipe and a new book by a pessimistic philosopher in whom his soul delighted. He had just remarked to Mrs. Browne apropos of something she had been telling him, that life wasn't a fairy tale, not by a long shot. Mrs. Browne was crocheting table mats on the other side of the hearth, while Bernard, who was visiting his grand-parents, pending the arrival of a new member in his immediate family, lay on the rug, putting together a dissected picture Jane had loaned him.

In this pleasant domestic atmosphere the Blind Man felt unusually cheerful. He had been lucky to get hold of that book so early. It would be a week or so yet before it was on the library shelves, and then likely as not, someone would have got ahead of him. He had chanced to see it on Angela's table, and knowing review copies were returned to the office, where they were appropriated by the various members of the staff, and being quite certain to whom this volume would fall, he had happened in opportunely with a request to be allowed to borrow it, later on.

"Take it along now," his friend, the editor, had said. "I am too busy to read it myself,

and no one else in the office cares for this sort of thing."

So the Blind Man, with inward glee, slipped the book into his overcoat pocket, a habit his wife constantly deplored, and hastened home.

For some minutes he smoked happily, allowing his eyes to dwell in anticipation upon the book which, in its sober outer cover of grayish green paper, lay beside him on the table, tasting its cynical wit in fancy, and at length when anticipation would yield nothing more, he drew it to him and opened it.

He opened it in the middle, just to take a taste of the feast before he set regularly to work. But—what made it look so odd? The Blind Man rubbed his eyes and tried again, and the next minute startled his wife by a most reprehensible exclamation, causing her to drop her work and sit very erect. That her surprise and indignation were warranted must be reluctantly granted, for the words the Blind Man uttered so forcibly were, "The Devil!"

"Alpheus, I beg you at least to remember, if you don't respect your wife, that your grandson is present!" cried Mrs. Browne.

He begged her pardon, assuring her that he respected her quite as much as he did Ber-

nard, but adding that there were times when only the individual whose name she disliked seemed to fill the bill, and this was one of them. Somebody had played a disgusting, practical joke on him and as sure as his name was Alpheus Browne, he should suffer for it! "Here I climbed three flights to Tompkins' office," he said "—the elevator wasn't running—to get a certain book, and now it turns out to be some ridiculous fairy tale. The outside covers have been changed. If I don't ferret this out and bring the perpetrator to justice——!" His irritation grew with every word he uttered.

"Some horrid unorthodox thing, no doubt. You deserve what you get in my opinion," his wife declared.

"Unorthodox," excited the Blind Man to unholy laughter. To call "Cosmical Conundrums" unorthodox was, indeed, like gilding refined gold.

"You may laugh in that disagreeable way if you choose, but I know it is unorthodox for all that, and I deplore it, Alpheus—your taste for that sort of thing." When Mrs. Browne tells the story, she emphasizes this.

So an innocent lamb in wolf's dress became the cause of dissension in a peaceful family.

When you prefer wolf, it is disappointing to have lamb served to you. The Blind Man continued to bestow silent anathemas upon the unknown author of this beastly trick, and all the while his enemy was one of his own household, and lay on his stomach kicking his heels as he re-constructed a battleship, so concentrated upon his task that his grandfather's wrath was unobserved.

For a long time Mr. Browne sat and smoked in silence, glaring at the book he had flung so savagely on the table, but when Mrs. Browne and Bernard at length retired, his wrath which had gradually cooled, gave way to curiosity and he drew the despised book to him again.

The Cock and the Horse! This was queer, he thought. He turned the pages, what sort of a book was it, anyway? The clock struck twelve, its last stroke penetrating the Blind Man's consciousness, and he looked up. "Well, I'll be—'gormed,'" he said cautiously, with a glance over his shoulder, "if this isn't a queer tale!"

Strangely enough, he had found some of his own favorite ideas, but dressed up in a fantastic way, and worked out to most illogical conclusions. Cleverly done—oh, yes! He was

smiling, and continued to smile in a fresh place every few minutes, as he thought it over. Unmitigated nonsense, but the humor was after his own heart; more genial than he demanded, but of the sort which turns accepted notions upside down and inside out. And there was St. Anne's done to a dot! Could Angela have written it? No. It was not a feminine touch, he decided. Really his use of Mr. Peggotty's exclamation showed great self-control.

The next morning he walked in upon Angela, demanding who wrote that fool book, *The Cock and the Horse.* It happened that Angela had just submitted her review of it to David, who being occupied in the study of pioneer days in Captain Mac's library, found it convenient to drop in frequently. She liked the book so much she said, she was afraid of over-praising it.

David agreed with her that it was great, and besides had dramatic possibilities. "There are two or three scenes there which belong in a play," he pointed out. "Let's dramatize it together, try our hand, anyhow, and if it goes well we'll write to the publishers for permission."

The Blind Man related how he had been

tricked, with some relish for his own discomfiture, though he still vowed vengeance upon the person who was responsible.

"Well, that's funny," David remarked. "When I met Teddy Roberts on the train going up to Chicago, he was as mad as the mischief because a book he had picked up, thinking it was a detective story, turned out to be essays in literary interpretation, or something of the sort. It had the wrong cover on it."

During this conversation Jane, with ostentatious unconcern, was arranging her box of colored crayons. Angela looked thoughtfully in her direction. "Jane, do you know anything about this?" she asked.

"About what, Angela?"

"How the covers of the books happened to be changed. Come and let me look in your eyes."

Reluctantly Jane came and stood by the table, fingering the leaves of the dictionary. "Why, Angela, you know, Bernard was playing with me, and he said, 'Let's change their dresses,' and so we put pretty dresses on the ugly ones and ugly dresses on the pretty ones, 'cause Bernard said that was fair." Here Jane looked around her audience, and catching a

smile on David's face, smiled too. Angela was grave.

"It was awf'ly hard, Angela, to make them fit," Jane continued. "We had to try and try, for some were fatter than the others, and Bernard said——"

"Never mind Bernard," said Angela. "Jane darling, you knew it was naughty to meddle with the books. Now, didn't you?"

"Well, but Angela, you never said not to change their dresses. You just said to be sure your hands were clean."

"Don't scold her, she won't do it again, will you, Jane?" said David.

"That scalawag Bernard! I'll attend to him!" exclaimed the Blind Man. "But that's a sense of fairness for you, now," he added. "Pretty clothes for the ugly ones, and ugly clothes for the pretty ones, eh?"

In consequence of this prank Jane wasn't allowed to "R" any books for a whole month, a punishment she regarded as severe. She watched Miss Goldie do it, and criticized her Rs very sternly, and offered to show her how, and in various ways tried to get around the injunction, till Angela had to interfere.

A volume almost might be written of the adventures which befell on account of the

changed book covers, but we are only interested in *The Cock and the Horse,* which went on its triumphant way, getting itself read.

It was a queer title, people thought. It might be a fairy tale, a satire, or an allegory, or even a novel, so far as the name indicated, and it transpired later that it was one thing to one person and something quite different to another. Angela cut out and treasured all the reviews of it she could find.

The Wise and Prudent said there wasn't much to it except an unusually fascinating style. Some found it puzzling and demanded to know what it meant, and there were certain who replied they did not know, but liked it nevertheless.

In reality it was the simplest kind of a story, which told the reader many things he already knew, but transfigured these commonplaces, and made them deeply, vitally interesting. It was the story of a man who went to an infirmary to die. It wasn't called St. Anne's, but if you were familiar with St. Anne's, you recognized it. He was a very rich man and he was troubled to know what was to become of his possessions, for he could not bear to think of wasting a penny of that which he had accumulated with such labor.

As he lay on his bed by a window, he could see the weather vanes, and upon his sick fancy they exerted a peculiar influence. He thought they came down from their gables and talked to him, urging upon him diametrically different courses of action.

The Cock strutting in appealed to him as a man of common sense, of wisdom and prudence, and advised him to bestow his money carefully; to found some great institution, not fritter it away in small bequests, for which he would get little or no credit. "Do something big! Tie it up, hedge it around with restrictions, to insure the carrying out of your wishes. Send for a lawyer at once." So spoke the Cock, and he displayed such dignity of demeanor, such confidence in his own wisdom, the sick man was all but convinced.

Then the Horse came galloping in, and there was something about him which took the invalid back to his boyhood, something that suggested a daring, care-free good time. "What you need," said the Horse, "is to be free. Your wealth, of which you think so much, has shackled you. Break loose before it is too late. Never mind if you do waste it, you are wasting your soul now. Peace of mind, joy, are worth more than money. Worth more

to you and more to the world. Think of kindness and happiness, and let the money take care of itself." The Horse tossed his head gaily.

"Don't listen to him. All his fine talk is nonsense," said the Cock. "You may be a slave, but you can't help it now. Send for your lawyer."

"It is never too late—don't you believe it," urged the Horse. "Try having a good time for once. Do something just for fun!"

These words took hold of the sick man. He hadn't done anything just for fun since he was a schoolboy. "For fun, for fun," he repeated, over and over, and something like peace began to steal upon his soul. The next day was one of his good days, when he was able to be moved into a rolling chair and taken into the corridor. There he met a little girl in another chair, and asked her very cautiously, when no one was looking, if she knew how to do things for fun. The little girl, of course, knew, and undertook to teach him.

Under her guidance he learned how to propitiate the fairies, and how to make places for them: for the reason that there are so few fairies, so it was explained, is that they have been crowded out. When he was sufficiently

advanced his small friend took him on excursions into the Land-of-What-You-Please.

All this while the doctors were expecting him to die, and talking about the wonderful strength of his constitution. But when, at length, even they could not help seeing he was getting well, they began to plume themselves upon their skill and to make out tremendous bills.

The story went on to tell of the fun he had with the little girl, of how he learned the value of joy, and got along without a lawyer (not that lawyers aren't very necessary sometimes), and how he made places for the fairies, instead of endowing an institution.

This is, you perceive, the merest outline. There were some other patients, and the doctors and nurses; there was a glimpse of the neighborhood, and a bit of a love story, all bound together by the kindliest, wisest humor. But perhaps you have read it.

Jane loved *The Cock and the Horse*. She had the advantage of two interpretations, for Miss Goldie told her the story over her buttonholes, and Angela told it to her before the fire at going-to-bed time.

Miss Goldie liked the fairy part, and Angela—well, Angela loved it all. Surely the un-

known author would have felt honored if he could have heard her tell it with both laughter and tears, hugging Jane close in the firelight, especially if he knew how critical and hard to please Angela was in the matter of stories.

Only Jane had the privilege of knowing how Angela really felt, for after that first little burst of enthusiasm she was quite indifferent and calm about it in public. You might have thought her ardor had cooled, but Jane knew better. She, however, saw no reason why you should not laugh and cry over a story and talk about it every night of the week, if you wanted to. Jane never grew tired of a really good story, sympathetically related. She was used to being in the Land-of-What-You-Please, where things do not have to be explained.

The Assistant was some time in getting around to the book, for he was very busy in these days, and read little fiction. The Blind Man, who liked to tease Roger, told him it was quite in line with his celebrated sermon; and this perhaps excited his curiosity, for he borrowed it soon after from Angela.

When he returned it, he told her it reminded him in the oddest way of a friend of his. "He couldn't have written it, of course, but it is queer how many of his ideas I found in it."

CHAPTER XVIII

DAVID LEARNS SOMETHING

"THE Cock and the Horse say 'wiggle waggle'; may I come in?" It was David who asked the question, and he was already in, as it happened and Laurine had closed the door behind him.

"I don't know what they have to do with it, but I suppose you may," said Miss Goldie, pretending not to be delighted. "But Angela isn't here and I am very busy putting in some last stitches."

"So am I," said Jane, who had her paper dolls spread out on one of the low window sills.

David remarked he feared he was *de trop;* but it did not appear to embarrass him in the least, for he sat down before the fire and reaching for the poker, stirred up a beautiful blaze.

"You say you don't know what they have to do with it? Why, everything. The Cock and the Horse are the stars by which I point my course. I come down here several times a week just to consult them. If they had pointed due north, for instance, this afternoon, I should have gone straight to Captain Mac's to read in a learned tome, but as it is, I feel at liberty to wiggle waggle myself, and turn aside to see you and Jane."

Jane laughed at this, and leaving her dolls, came to his side. "They aren't stars, they are weather vanes," she corrected.

"That remark is unworthy of you, Jane. Can't I call them stars if I wish to?"

Jane looked downcast at this, and seating herself on a footstool to consider it, she said severely, "You'd better brush up the ashes."

Miss Goldie, who was folding her work into a neat bundle, explained that she must run over to Madame Berry's, but David might stay with Jane if he wanted to, and Angela would be in before long.

The library, which Angela said was called the library because it wasn't anything else in particular, was, perhaps, by very reason of its nondescript character, an especially pleasant

room. She had recently rented the two rooms across the hall to a physician whose patients used the side entrance, and did not track up the front steps, and who was really very little trouble, and in consequence of this the dining-room had become a composite, with all the books and things from the other rooms which it could comfortably accommodate, while Angela, Jane and Miss Goldie ate in the little breakfast room, which was quite large enough for them.

Obediently wielding the hearth broom, David looked about him with approval. "This is the jolliest room I know," he remarked.

Since Angela and he had been turning *The Cock and the Horse* into a play, David had been often in Sycamore Street, and had in so many ways made himself both useful and charming, that he really filled the place of an old and intimate friend to the household.

After watching him brush up the ashes, Jane suddenly asked, "Do you know what Kind Red Spirits are?"

"Why, no. You are always telling me something interesting. What are they?"

Greatly flattered, Jane assumed an air of importance. "They are people who believe in fairies," she explained.

"Indeed! Kind Red Spirits," David repeated. "It has a fantastic sound."

"Angela didn't know about them either till I read it in a book."

"You don't mean you can read?"

"Not very well. I have to spell a good deal. I'll show it to you in the book I was reading. I put a mark in it." Jane took a volume from the table and opening it, pointed with a plump forefinger to the words, "Kate and Mary were kindred spirits." "Angela laughed and laughed," she continued, "and said she guessed they were people who believed in fairies, so Miss Goldie and I made up a story about them. You know the Ogre?"

David said he didn't, but he'd love to. He had never even seen a real ogre in his life, so far as he knew.

"I never saw him either, and I want to awfully," said Jane. "Miss Goldie says he is always disguised, usually as a gentleman."

"I see; that complicates the situation greatly."

"I can tell you where he lives. Do you know the tower where the big clock is?" Jane pointed down the street.

"You don't mean the Trust Company Building? You don't say so! Why, I have an of-

fice there myself! And I never suspected the Ogre."

"Right under the tower. Miss Goldie saw him once. And what do you think he does? He eats up stockings and bonnets, and even houses, all but the worst of your furniture! He ate up Miss Goldie's."

"Remarkable taste, I must say!"

"And I'll tell you something else," Jane went on, delighted with the impression she was making. "You know the clock? Well, it isn't a clock at all but just a big owl that belongs to the Ogre. At night you can see he is an owl, and then if you say:

" 'Oh, gloomy owl with yellow eyes
You cannot take me by surprise.
I know you're there, and I'll beware,'

he can't hurt you."

"This is deeply interesting. I am greatly obliged to you for telling me about the Ogre. Has he anything to do with the Kind Red Spirits?"

"Why, they help the fairies you know, and some day they are going to bind him hand and foot and put him in a dungeon," she explained triumphantly.

The Blind Man's wife came in with Angela just here and spoiled it all. You couldn't discuss fairies and ogres in her presence possibly. The servant question occupied her to the exclusion of other things. She couldn't see how Angela managed to keep Laurine. Angela said she didn't manage—that was it.

David whispered to Jane: "Let's go to see Cousin John, and get her to talk about old times."

Jane assented eagerly. It was fun to go anywhere with this delightful playfellow, so her face and hands having passed muster, across the street they went to St. Anne's, hand in hand.

Mrs. Clay, like most elderly people, loved to talk of the days of her youth, and David, to use his own expression, soon had her going. As it chanced this afternoon her reminiscences touched upon Miss Goldie's family.

"All the ground where the new hotel stands once belonged to little Goldine's grandfather," said Mrs. Clay. "When I was a girl the Deanes were among the wealthiest people here. There was a large family of them and the money was pretty well gone before the third generation. Goldie and her mother had enough to keep them in comfort, however, but

they were badly advised, and in one way and another it vanished. The last of it went in that Y. Z. Railroad in which so many were caught fifteen or twenty years ago. Angela's father lost heavily, too, and Alpheus Browne. Peyton Randall laid the foundation of his fortune in that deal, I have heard."

"Old P. K.?" cried David. "Stockings and bonnets! I'll bet I know who the Ogre is!"

"I must say you make use of extraordinary expressions," remarked Cousin John.

"David, please tell me who he is!" begged Jane.

"But you see I am not perfectly certain, and it would be most dangerous to make a mistake. We might both lose our heads," he gravely assured her.

Cousin John's "Humph!" was as much as to say the loss would not be serious. She liked nonsense, however, even though she pretended not to. Else why should she have begged them to come again?

"Disguised as a gentleman," repeated David on their way home; "I like that, Jane. This has been an illuminating afternoon, thanks to you. Hereafter, when I am reproached for indulging in a certain harmless pastime, I shall re-

mark that in this case the name makes all the difference. Call it finance, or business and it is all right. Ha! ha!"

Jane looked at him in surprise. This was a David she did not know.

CHAPTER XIX

A MUTUAL FRIEND

CERTAINLY Angela behaved rather queerly, though no one but Jane was aware of it. It began with a conversation in Cousin John's room at St. Anne's.

The old lady had been having a bad time with her eyes for a week, and her neighborhood friends were doing all they could to divert and entertain her. When Angela and Jane went in this afternoon, they found the Assistant chatting with her. Cousin John liked Roger and called him her pastoral visitor.

He was describing with a good deal of enthusiasm a friend of his, who, Cousin John told Angela, was evidently one of those old-fashioned heroes she used to read about in novels when she was young, but had never met in real life.

Roger looked a little hurt, and Angela remarked that she had often noticed Cousin John was over-critical of heroes.

"Go on with your story, however," Mrs. Clay commanded. "I don't like half-told tales."

"Probably I am rather soft about Dick," Roger owned, "but I'm not the only one. When I was a little chap I looked up to him as an oracle, and perhaps I still do in a way. He has had such a lot to contend against, and in spite of it is the happiest person I know. It was while he was at the German University that the trouble began. His brother, a good deal older than he, became involved in some financial difficulties. He was president of a large Trust Company, and his sudden death caused a terrible mix-up, so Dick had to come back and set himself to untangling things. He gave up what was left of his own fortune, though he was in no way legally bound to, and undertook to provide for the education of one of his brother's two children besides.

"You may imagine how he has had to work. He has edited a scientific magazine, lectured, and written several books. Talk about faith, Miss Hearn, he has more than anyone I know. I mean faith in the wide sense of its all being

somehow worth while—the struggle, you know. Life is something big and splendid to him."

"He has never lost his sight, and is young and strong and gifted," was Cousin John's comment.

Angela seemed about to speak, when Roger went on:

"You would like him, Miss Angela. He is in India now, doing some research work with Dr. Grant of——"

"Dear me, is this that friend of Timothy Grant's?" Cousin John interrupted. "I have heard Hildegarde mention him."

Again it seemed as if Angela were going to speak, but this time it was Lucia King who prevented, ushered in by the little sister. She had heard how ailing Cousin John was.

Jane had not seen the Princess since the day she cried in the old church and embarrassed everybody, months ago. The recollection of it now subdued her a little. But Lucia was in a most gracious mood, solicitous for Cousin John and affability itself to the others.

"We are talking of some friends of yours," Mrs. Clay told her. "Don't go, Angela, you know Lucia? Miss King is one of your flock, Mr. Penrose, isn't she?

"Friends of mine?" questioned Lucia.

"The Grants," Cousin John answered. "Mr. Penrose knows them."

"You do?" she turned to the Assistant. "They are great friends of mine."

"I know Miss Hildegarde and her brother slightly, but it was of my cousin Richard Waite I was speaking."

"Mr. Waite your cousin? How extraordinary! I have met him often at the Grant's. He is charming."

Roger seemed to accept this as a compliment. Cousin John lifted her hands, "Another!" she exclaimed.

"Another what?" inquired Jane, and Roger said, laughing, "I told you I was not the only one."

"I had a letter from Miss Grant last week," continued Lucia. "She hopes to meet the travellers somewhere in Europe next summer and is begging me to join her."

Miss King stayed only a few minutes. Every hour of her day was full, she explained. When she left, Roger Penrose went with her. Angela and Jane, following a little later, found him still talking to her, his hand on the door of her car.

She was questioning him in the kindest way about his school, he said, when he overtook

them at the gate. Perhaps she had not been as displeased with him as he thought. Miss King was a lovely woman!

Angela did not respond with an enthusiasm, in fact, she seemed absent-minded. Shortly before dinner, going into her room Jane found her with her elbows on the dressing table and her head in her hands.

"Oh, Angela, let me take your hair down, please!" she begged.

"Why, my darling, I have just put it up. See if my handkerchief is on the couch, won't you?"

Jane found the handkerchief. "I believe you have been crying," she said sternly.

"Well, can't I cry once in a while if I want to? You do."

"What were you crying about?" Jane demanded to know.

"Don't be such an inquisitor. People don't always know what they are crying for. Don't, dear; I must finish dressing;" for Jane had managed to wriggle herself into Angela's lap.

With her arms around her neck in a very close embrace, she whispered, "Angela, when is the Kind Man coming back? It has been such a long time."

"I don't know, Jane, darling. What made you think of him?"

"I wish he'd come back," said Jane. "Isn't he a Kind Red Spirit? That's what made me think of him."

Angela rubbed her cheek against Jane's. "I am sure he is," she said, adding with a sigh, "I was silly this afternoon."

"Were you?" said Jane.

"I am glad you didn't notice it, my precious, but I was. I should have said something and didn't. When you aren't used to mentioning a thing; when it has become second nature to keep it to yourself, it is hard to break the silence. Oh, dear!" giving Jane another hug, "secrecy has a deteriorating effect, I fear. How strange that Roger Penrose and Lucia King should—— Really, I do not see how I could have spoken, but now it will be doubly hard if the opportunity comes again."

"Angela, I don't know what you are talking about," Jane remarked patiently. "Please don't cry any more."

"I don't wonder, Jane, darling. It is because I am a goose. Isn't that the bell?"

The Assistant, who had long ago come to be regarded as a permanent lodger had, it chanced, been invited to dinner that evening.

At the table his thoughts still turned to Miss Lucia King, her benefactions, her difficulties. "It seems so odd that she should know Dick Waite," he said. "Of course, it isn't, as they are both such friends of the Grants. I was just thinking what fun it would be for him to marry someone like Miss King, with lots of money. I am sure she is not a worldly person at heart, but she needs guidance, and—— What are you laughing at, Miss Hearn?"

"At Mr. Roger Penrose in the role of a match-maker," she answered, and really it seemed to amuse her extremely, for several times during the meal she broke into a little laugh as if she couldn't help it, possibly.

In these days Jane had lost interest in the Princess. In the church matter her feelings had been hurt, and then there were other people quite as alluring and more friendly. David, for instance.

CHAPTER XX

COUSIN JOHN'S STORY

"ANYHOW," said Roger, "it seems to me the sooner we give up quarrelling with God or fate, or whatever you choose to call it, and recognize that it isn't our business, and then go to work doing what we can to make things better——"

"Making places for the fairies, in other words," suggested Angela, who, with Jane, had come up behind them unobserved.

"Exactly," said Roger, laughing, "and the sooner——"

"What you call faith is a matter of temperament, anyhow. It's a form of enthusiasm, and some people aren't made that way," the Blind Man interrupted.

"There is one thing I think you must own," Roger replied. "You never knew anybody who was worse off for believing in God as a

father. Faith like that never belittled anyone, never made him idle or vicious, never added to his poverty or made him ill, to put it in a purely negative way, and doubt and despair do all these things. You have to own the dynamic power of faith."

"I knew you'd say 'dynamic' before you finished," jeered the Blind Man. "It's a most impressive word, but it is overworked. But let me say to you that intellectual honesty is more to me than anything else. I'd rather be honest and unhappy than delude myself with unfounded hopes." The Blind Man brought his hand down on the fence with an emphasis worthy of this noble attitude.

"There are more ways than one of knowing things," began Roger.

"And more ways than one of deceiving yourself," added the Blind Man. "I can't see——"

"Come in, both of you, and have a cup of tea," urged Angela, "Cousin John is in the library; this is the first time she has been out. We'll have a party in her honor."

"Laurine is baking ginger cookies," Jane added by way of inducement, and it seemed to clinch the matter for the disputants accepted and went in together quite harmoniously.

Cousin John had been looking over some

old belongings, things stored away at the Trust Company for years, which, while she still had some sight left, she wished to dispose of. Among them she had found a miniature of Mrs. Porterfield, which she was going to give to little Jane.

"My mother, you know, was a cousin of Jane Porterfield's, and very devoted to her," she said, taking the picture from her bag, and putting it into Jane's hand.

A quaint, flat picture it was, of a girl of twelve or fifteen, suggesting, Angela said, drawing Jane to her and looking over her shoulder, some pressed and faded flower. "It is your great-great-grandmother, my darling, when she was a little girl."

"I think she was a funny little girl," Jane said doubtfully.

"It doesn't give much evidence of the strength of character she developed later," Cousin John said, "and yet you may notice how firm are the lines about the mouth. With the picture was a worn copy of 'The Imitation,' between the leaves of which I found an old letter I did not know was in existence. These things have been packed away dear knows how many years. In this letter written to my mother nearly seventy years ago, Mrs. Porter-

field mentions her gift to the church of the lot on Sycamore and North Streets, which was part of the old estate. The Porterfield home stood I should say about in the middle of this block, in ample grounds, in what was then the outskirts of the town."

The Blind Man nodded. In his boyhood the house was still standing. He remembered it well.

"Jane's great-great-grandmother, by the way, was a Porterfield by both birth and marriage. As is rather the habit in the family, she married her cousin," continued Mrs. Clay. "But to go back to the letter, in it Aunt Jane, as I was brought up to call her, tells the story of her answered prayer. I feel sure if it had been in evidence at the time of the trial the verdict would have been different."

"I doubt it," remarked the Blind Man. "The meaning of that clause was as plain as the nose on your face, anyhow."

"Tell us the story. I only half remember it," said Angela. "Mr. Penrose will like to hear it, and here comes Miss Goldie."

And so over the tea cups, while Jane ate cookies and studied the face of the little Jane Porterfield of long, long ago, Cousin John related the story.

"Jane, and her husband, General Porterfield," she said, "were free thinkers as many thoughtful, intellectual people were in that day. He was in public life at this time, and a man of brilliant gifts and much beloved, but as often happens, the object of the bitter enmity of a certain unscrupulous clique. His wife worshipped him and had thrown herself with enthusiasm into his career.

"Not to make too long a story, General Porterfield got into trouble. I can't tell you now what it was, but he was accused of some breach of trust, possibly in connection with public lands. He emphatically denied the charges, but the case against him was apparently so clear, even his personal friends were staggered. He claimed that there was in existence, or had been recently, a document which would clear him, but this paper had mysteriously disappeared.

"Jane, who otherwise would have been at her husband's side, had been kept at home by the illness of her daughter, and you can imagine how torn her heart was as she sat by her child's bedside and thought of the disgrace which threatened her husband. She was a woman of unswerving rectitude, and the situation must have been intolerable to her.

"She was one morning walking back and forth in the grounds near the house, she says, thinking of the lost paper, and all that hung upon it, and her agony of mind was so great she seemed to lose consciousness, she did not know for how long, and when she came to herself she was on her knees praying to the God whose existence she denied, that this wrong might be righted. It was a desperate reaching out into the unknown for help, when human aid had proved vain. The strange thing is that as she knelt there she felt assured that her prayer was heard. The conviction was so strong, she rose and went to the house, and wrote her husband a letter of encouragement, saying she was confident that within the next few days something would happen to throw light on his innocence. The next morning that missing paper was brought to her by the hands of a messenger to whose identity no clue was ever found. Persumably it had been stolen in the first instance, and someone concerned, overtaken by remorse at the eleventh hour, had restored it."

"It almost seems as if it might have been an angel," said Miss Goldie, timidly, thinking, no doubt, of one of her favorite Bible stories, "who brought it back, I mean."

"Or a fairy," put in Jane who had been listening earnestly.

"I like your story," Roger said. "How does it strike you, Mr. Browne?"

"Alpheus will call it a coincidence, but for my part I am inclined to believe there is such a thing as answered prayer; you may talk all you please about the uniformity of law. But I don't pretend to understand it."

The Blind Man owned it was a remarkable coincidence, any farther than that he couldn't go, but what impressed him was the certainty that Mrs. Porterfield had intended her gift to be a perpetual memorial to what she felt was an answered prayer. "And now, honestly," he said, "don't you think when Jane gave that ground to the Lord it looks a little shabby in Him not to have held on to it, instead of allowing Carter King and the rest to have their way?"

The Blind Man was incorrigible.

CHAPTER XXI

STRAWS

THE air with which Mr. Samm referred to the fact that he and Mr. David King had conducted the singing down at Penrose's Mission last Sunday, was immense. "Now that's my idea of Christian brotherhood," said Mr. Samm. "Persons of different beliefs uniting in song and in instructing the less fortunate."

It was a question who got the most enjoyment out of the occasion. David failed to find words to express his delight in Mr. Samm, as to an amused audience in Angela's library he rehearsed the scene.

The Assistant had lost his voice, and David, hearing of his difficulty over the music, good-naturedly offered to help him, but David-like had arrived half an hour late, to find Mr. Samm bravely grappling with the situation.

He was, David said, a willing singer, and when relieved of the responsibility of the piano, which he played only by ear, his enthusiasm was contagious. The music was a grand success. Roger said he wished he could afford to engage them permanently.

Thus it will be observed, Kenton Place and Sycamore Street continued to show a tendency to intermingle. The next turn of the wheel brought something more surprising, yet perfectly natural when you looked into it.

Susie ran over one afternoon in a gale of excitement to tell her news. For several weeks she had been out of work. They were reorganizing and doubling up in the advertising department, and Susie being one of the most recent employees was among those dispensed with. It had been particularly hard just then, for her help was needed at home, but her friends had been most kind in finding odd bits of work for her here and there, while she looked for a new place. Angela had given her copying, and Cousin John had employed her to write letters and read to her, and now, through the recommendation of Mr. Penrose, Miss Lucia King had engaged her as her secretary.

"I am delighted, Susie," Angela said. "It

will tide you over nicely till you can find a permanent position."

"Perhaps this will be permanent, if I please her," Susie replied with a little pout. "Mr. Penrose thinks she will find she cannot get along without a secretary."

"I am sure you will please her, Cinderella," Angela said, "but persons like Miss King can scarcely be depended on for permanent work of that sort. I hear she is going abroad this summer."

That Susie did please Miss King was made plain in several ways. Cousin John said Lucia told her she was delighted with the girl's intelligence and gentle manners. She found her most attractive. To Roger Penrose she said the same.

Susie found the work light, and Lucia's rule mild indeed, after that of Mr. Carroll, and the great house was a palace of wonders to her of which she never tired of talking. Jane and Miss Goldie, having themselves been there, asked her a great many questions.

Susie said she really believed Miss King was lonely, in spite of being so rich and beautiful. No one ever dropped in upon her after the sociable custom of Sycamore Street, and being in mourning, she did not go anywhere.

She seemed to like to talk to her little secretary, perhaps the admiration she read in Susie's eyes was agreeable to her, for she often kept her after hours, sending her home in the luxurious limousine.

Susie saw the plans for the apartment house which was to be built on the church corner. Work was to be begun in a week or two, she understood.

"It seems strange," Susie remarked one evening, "but I don't think Miss King is happy, for all her money. She worries so."

"Well, there are troubles in the world beside lack of money," Angela suggested.

"I fear she and her brother do not agree," the Assistant, who happened to be present, added. "She is devoted to him, too."

"Do you mean David?" asked Jane; and Angela said perhaps they'd better not discuss Miss King's affairs.

Jane began to be dimly aware about this time, that something was amiss with David. She did not see him so often, and when he did come in he was not exactly his old delightful self. The play he and Angela had been so merry over for a time, lagged.

Jane sat in Angela's chair before the study table one afternoon, writing on a large pad,

with an air of deep absorption, when David opened the door.

"Alone, Just Jane?" he inquired.

She assured him she was. Angela had not come in and Miss Goldie was upstairs.

David sat on the edge of the table and smiled down on her. "Engaged in literary work, I presume?"

Jane understood the phrase. "Yes," she said, "I am writing my Rememberings, and I am going to have my picture taken to go with them, for my little great-great-grand-daughter."

"Such forethought impresses me, Just Jane. What made you think of it?" David had not seen or heard of the miniature of Jane Porterfield, it seemed.

Jane ran to the cabinet where Angela had placed it, and took it out to show him. She had begun to have a deep affection for this old-fashioned Jane.

David examined it while she explained. "This is very odd and interesting, but I believe on the whole I'd rather have your own likeness. I trust you are going to give me one. By the way, were there some rememberings with this?"

"Only a letter," Jane said. "Would you

like to read it?" for it, too, was on the cabinet shelf.

"Why, yes, if you will allow me. Written seventy years ago and about the church? That is quite in my line."

David read it through, a frown gathering and deepening between his eyes. "Thank you, Jane Porterfield," he said when he finished; "I wonder if you will do me a favor? Just lend me this for a day or two. I'll take the best care of it."

Jane set no great store by the letter, and if she had she was always ready to do what David asked. So when he left he carried the letter in his pocket.

"David here? Why didn't he wait?" Angela exclaimed, coming in a few minutes later.

CHAPTER XXII

SOMEWHAT DEPRESSING

ANGELA and Jane, on their way back from market, stopped to give Mrs. Marple a recipe for Laurine's spoon bread. The lady was doing the breakfast dishes in the dining-room with the help of Miss Percy and as they entered she was saying, "Well, if I was worth two or three millions it seems to me I could keep from breaking down."

"Goodness! Is she that rich?" Miss Percy studied her reflection in the sideboard mirror as she wiped a plate.

"Mr. Browne said eight or ten, but he exaggerates. Why, Angela, come in, you and Jane! We are talking about Miss King. She is ill, and is going to a sanitarium. Did you hear about her tearing up the plans for the apartment house right before Susie's eyes? It was queer, wasn't it?"

"I suppose she'll take the rest cure," said Miss Percy. "Maggie Berry told me it cost Mrs. Perkins over a hundred dollars a week at some sanitarium up North."

"It looks as if rest had gone up like marketing," sighed Mrs. Marple. "They have raised the water tax on us. It will be air next, I suppose."

"We'll have to stop breathing and go up ourselves, then," Miss Percy suggested cheerfully.

"It behooves us to make certain it *will* be up, and not down, when the time comes," was Mrs. Marple's serious response. "Well, Miss King was real kind to Susie and paid her well."

"I haven't a doubt her brother is to blame for her illness," Miss Percy said. "They say she's devoted to him, and for him to get mixed up in that scandalous affair at the club. It's a shame!"

Mrs. Marple shook her head. "Money doesn't keep trouble away," she said, adding, "but I liked Mr. King. That was a kind thing he did for Susie once."

"It seems to me you have the trouble anyway, so I'll take money with mine," her sister-in-law declared.

Angela found an opportunity here to explain about the spoon bread.

"Thank you, Angela, you are a good neighbor. And that reminds me, I forgot to tell you, Percy, I have as good as promised to take some knights when they have the big meeting here in June, and Angela, who heard me talking to Mr. Nash, says she'll be glad for you and Susie to come over there to sleep, if it would give me more room. They are willing to pay a good price, so I think we can manage."

"Mercy, yes! let's take them. We'll camp out somewhere," agreed Miss Percy.

"Yes, I can sleep in the linen closet, myself," said Mrs. Marple, "and Mr. Samm will be willing to go up to the trunk room for a day or two, I know. We can get along."

Now that Sycamore Street was in touch with Kenton Place at so many points, it could not be wholly in the dark as to the state of affairs at the Kings'. Cousin John, with her many Aloofer friends; the Assistant in constant communication with the Brewers, who were once more at home; Susie Merrifield so closely associated for the time with Lucia, were so many channels of information, bits of which must sift through the most delicate dis-

cretion. You can't be silent when silence seems unfair, and being human you are bound in some measure to take sides.

Putting this and that together, certain things are clear. The letter Jane allowed David to carry away, will explain Lucia's action in tearing the plans in Susie's presence, and then bursting into tears, a performance altogether out of keeping with the self-contained, aloof Miss King as she has appeared heretofore in this story.

Then there was the talk that connected David's name with the unsavory details of a notorious dinner party, which came to Mrs. Clay from several sources. Some blamed, others were inclined to condone. Mrs. Brewer said Lucia's heart was broken, and added, "How unfortunate that Peyton Randall should be abroad!"

Cousin John exclaimed, "Nonsense!" They needn't tell her David had done anything as terrible as all that. He was in bad company and had too much champagne. There wasn't anything really bad about the boy. He was young and spoiled, that was all. Lucia was in the nervous state in which every trifle is magnified a thousand fold. What good would she do by turning her back on her brother?

Susie sided with Lucia. David had been cruel to her, she said, and Roger Penrose acknowledged that he had known David was not exactly steady for some time.

Out of all the more or less guarded talk that went on around her, Jane gathered that her beloved David was in disgrace. "What has he done, Angela?" she asked.

"Jane, darling, I don't know. Something wrong, I suppose. We are all of us naughty at times, you know. I am afraid he has been in bad company."

"Is that what 'a bit wild' means?" Jane inquired, remembering Cousin John's words.

Angela laughed a little. "Yes, I suppose so," she answered.

"But aren't we going to forgive him, if he is sorry?" Jane urged.

"Of course we'll forgive him, dear, but we may not see him for a long time."

They did, however, as it chanced, see him the next day. Some poppy seed of a special variety was wanted for Jane's garden and this took them to a florist whose hot-houses were on the edge of town. A pleasant excursion for a beautiful April day.

There was a little girl belonging to the florist, whom Jane liked, and while Angela selected

her seed and some plants besides, the two children went off together to explore the greenhouses. When Jane returned to the front office, she found Angela talking to David. They both looked so grave she didn't venture to interrupt, but went quietly to Angela's side without a word.

David smiled at her, but not at all in his usual way. All the merry light was gone from his eyes.

"I hope I am not such a poor friend as that," Angela was saying.

"I shall not offer excuses, though I like to think I am not quite so black as I am painted," David said. "When I remember those hours with you last winter, I want to hang myself. I'm two persons and one of them is a weak fool; but if you'll let me, I will prove to you yet that I am not wholly unworthy."

"You do not need to prove that," she told him. "I know you have a battle to fight, but I feel certain the best self will win. You see all along I have looked upon you as—well, as another Jane, we'll say," she laughed, and drew the real Jane close to her.

"You are heavenly good," David cried. "Others haven't been so kind. But Angela," he hesitated oddly, "you must know how I

feel towards you. If I could prove myself not altogether unworthy, could you——?"

Angela interrupted, putting out her hand to stop him. "Oh, David, don't. I am afraid I have been blind and selfish. I have enjoyed your friendship, though you remember I at first accepted it unwillingly, but—why, I am older than you, David, and besides, there is someone else."

It seemed to Jane if she had been Angela she would have done what David wished, whatever it was, but Angela, she knew by experience, did not say "yes" to you just because she was sorry. Her "no" was "no," and you must try to believe that she knew best. But how could she bear that hurt look on David's face.

"Jane, darling, tell him how much we care for him, and believe in him," Angela said, and there were tears in her eyes.

And Jane, instead of saying it, put her arms around his neck and laid her cheek against his in a way she had with people she loved.

"And he is going away for a long time? I wish I could tell him goodbye," said Miss Goldie that night.

"He sent you his love," Angela replied, and added, "Poor David!"

"To change the subject," Miss Goldie continued, perhaps feeling that it would be wise to change it, "I met Mr. Samm as I came home this evening and he was walking with Miss Lura Converse. She plays the organ at the mission school now, and she seems to like Mr. Samm."

The next morning a box of roses came directed to "Miss Jane Porterfield West," which, perhaps, explained how David happened to be at the florist's, if it needs to be explained.

CHAPTER XXIII

A LETTER AND OTHER THINGS

THE street that September morning was gay with flags and bunting, in preparation for the great Masonic meeting, just opening. The old church neighborhood was proud to be included in the line of the parade and was pluming itself accordingly. Jane was watching while Mrs. Marple had benches set out in her front yard. "I've got thirty, and could have as many more," she called to Angela. "Don't you want some?"—meaning knights, of course.

Angela, crossing over, laughed and shook her head. "I thought you were going to send Miss Percy and Susie to our house to sleep," she said.

"Well, I'll tell you," Mrs. Marple replied, coming to the fence, "Susie's gone up home for a week. Seems a pity for her to miss all the fun, but it happened she could get off;

and to tell the truth I can't spare Percy, and I don't really think she could tear herself away, anyhow. They are all in for a good time, as sure as you live! Seems to me you're pale, Angela, after being in the country, too."

Angela assured her she never had much color, but owned to feeling languid. She and Miss Goldie and Jane had spent a month with Uncle Amos on the farm, and the other two had come back plump and rosy.

"You are just in time to read a letter to me," Cousin John said, when Angela and Jane entered her room. "It is from Hildegarde Grant, and I hesitate to inflict anything so gossipy as one of the Hildegarde's epistles upon Sister Mary Baptist. They are apt to be rather intimate, too, so I can't ask anybody and everybody to read them."

"If there is anything in it I should not know, I shall try to forget it as quickly as possible," Angela said, smiling, as she took the letter from Cousin John's hand.

It was an exceedingly pleasant letter; even Jane, whose head was full of the celebration, was interested in the newsy comment on places and persons Cousin John was familiar with. "We have been in this little university town for three weeks, Lucia and I," Hilde-

garde wrote, "Barrett and Mr. Waite were here before us. Lucia has improved wonderfully, and is really herself again. When I recall how ill she was three months ago I can hardly believe my eyes. Richard Waite and she are great friends, and I can't help thinking what a solution for both of them if it should ripen into something warmer. I think I once told you of the odds against which Mr. Waite has been struggling."

"I believe I have heard something of it," interposed Cousin John, dryly.

Angela continued reading: "He is just the person to bring out the best in Lucia. She, poor child, has had so much to try her since her father's death. She let me know that something had come between her and David, but it seems too painful to be spoken of. I can't help feeling bitterly towards David, for to me Lucia seems all gentleness and goodness. We go to Paris soon, Lucia expects to sail some time early in the month. I shall stay on with Barrett, if he will let me."

"So Lucia had a quarrel with David," Cousin John remarked when the reading was finished. "I wonder where the boy is?"

Angela shook her head. She had heard nothing of him since last spring, she said.

"I wish Hildegarde's paragon would marry Lucia. She needs humanizing," added Mrs. Clay.

This made Angela laugh, and the laughter came near ending in tears.

"You don't look well," Cousin John commented.

Angela owned her head ached a little.

"You should have come with me as I wished. A change of climate is what you need. You are stubborn."

Angela only smiled faintly and did not take the trouble to deny it.

When Jane and Miss Goldie came in from an excursion down town, full of the carnival spirit, they found her out of tune with their gayety. What delighted them, to her was a vain show. The town was full of Imperial Potentates, and subjects of the Mystic Shrine in varied and picturesque costume, mingling with plumed knights. Jane and Miss Goldie couldn't keep away from the window. A number of houses in the neighborhood were entertaining visitors, and knights in full regalia were a common sight, while on the church corner a vendor of souvenirs displayed his wares.

Jane came in decorated with a wonderful badge which someone had given her. "Angela,

why aren't you having a good time?" she asked reproachfully.

Miss Goldie's eyes asked the same question. Angela apologized. "I don't know, Jane darling. I feel horribly cross about nothing: but I am glad you are enjoying it."

"Hadn't you better take something, Angela, some quinine for instance?" Miss Goldie suggested.

She half consented, and Jane and Miss Goldie, going to the drug-store for it, had an adventure. A man in a red fez stepped in front of them saying courteously, "Just a minute, please," took their picture, and retired with, "Thank you."

The town was so full of people, the Blind Man said the usual order of things was reversed, and it was, "Strangers free and seats welcome."

The first great event was the grand parade, the next the ball at the Armory, which they heard about in fullest detail later on. Miss Percy was the only person in the neighborhood honored with an invitation, and the invitation was a small part of the honor accorded her, for had she not as escort one of the stateliest of plumed knights? Mrs. Marple gave them a graphic account of it.

This particular knight, it seemed, had decided at the last minute to attend the meeting, and being unable to get in at a hotel, had somehow found harbor in Mrs. Marple's best bedroom, providentially vacated the day before. He had lost his wife about a year ago, Mrs. Marple explained, and it was beautiful the way he spoke of her. He hadn't had much heart for anything since, but some of his friends urged him to come. "Well," said Mrs. Marple, "Percy was nice to him as she always is, and he chirked up a good deal the first evening. Then," she added reflectively, "I think it was her lemon pie as much as anything that took his fancy. Percy's a born cook. She told him, joking, you know, that she'd made one specially thick for him, and it tickled him most to death. Men do like to be made a fuss over. Well, when she asked him if he was going to the ball he said he'd go if she would. Mercy goodness! but we had a time getting her fixed to go. Percy has been real kind to Madame Berry, and she helped her out—loaned her a black lace dress. They took it up—she's stouter than Percy—and put new trimming on the waist, and I declare I never did see Percy look so well. You wouldn't have known her! They went in a carriage as

swell as you please, and I wish you had seen the flowers he sent her! I can tell you he did it up brown."

"Did she have a good time?" asked Miss Goldie.

"Did she? Well, I guess you'd think so if you could hear her. Mr. Cummock said she was the best looking woman there. I told Percy not to put too much stress on what he said, though, for these knights are out for a good time, and aren't caring what they say. She said I needn't to worry, that she wasn't born yesterday. She wasn't either. But do you know," Mrs. Marple added, "I felt real sorry for Mr. Samm. The man's been sleeping on a cot in the trunk room, as accommodating as you please, and then to have to stand by and see Percy going off so grand, and with his violet extract on her handkerchief, in company with a knight!"

It did seem hard, but the Blind Man reported later that he had chanced to see Mr. Samm that same evening watching the brilliant throng sweeping in at the broad entrance to the Armory where the ball was given, and by his side was Miss Lura Converse.

While these festivities were still going on, Jane found Angela writing a letter one morn-

ing; that is, she had her pen in her hand but was gazing absently out of the window. As Jane approached, she said, as if thinking aloud, "I am glad now I never told anyone."

"Told what?" Jane asked, but Angela only put her arms around her and leaned her head on her shoulder as if she felt very tired.

"It would undoubtedly be to the advantage of Roger's cousin to marry Miss Lucia King; don't you think so, Jane?" she said after a moment's silence. "You see she has piles of money and could help his schemes and, of course, she is charming. Most people think so."

"Does he want to marry her?" Jane inquired, feeling little interest in Roger's cousin.

"That is what I should like to know. He is a most loyal person. He may not realize he wants to, but—— Oh, Jane darling! it is so hard to know what is right."

If Jane had been years older she might have guessed at the state of affairs, and pointed out that Angela was acting in a manner she particularly detested when she came upon it in a novel. "The same silly heroine, the old hackneyed situation!" she would have exclaimed if she had been reviewing her own story.

Angela was not herself. Something was wrong, or she would not have written the letter Jane gave to the postman.

The knights went their way, banners and flags melted like morning dew from the face of the earth; the extra lights disappeared, and Sycamore Street once more settled into its humdrum ways; but the quinine, alas! did Angela no good.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BUSINESS WORLD

JANE and Miss Goldie were setting out on a very important mission. It was not, so far as Miss Goldie was concerned, a pleasure trip, such as going to the cemetery. No responsibility was involved in that beyond keeping an eye upon Jane, and straightening her hat once in a while, but the Business World was different. If you were Miss Goldie, you never went down to the Business World unless you had to, and when you did enter that region of mystery, you invariably, at every turn, did the wrong thing. From beginning to end its methods seemed contrived to trap the unwary into mistakes.

You made application at the wrong window or desk, and were referred somewhere else; you signed your name on the wrong line; you were bewildered by the unintelligible jargon

men were talking on all sides, and worse yet, were the arrogant young women who passed back and forth with papers, pretending they understood.

Miss Goldie was going to attend to some business for Angela who wasn't able to do it for herself. Nothing very complicated, and Angela, of course, did not dream of the burden she was placing on Miss Goldie's shoulders.

Jane was radiant because she was going to the Trust Company. She thought she might, perhaps, see the Ogre, and she felt no responsibility whatever. The revolving entrance doors, which in these days were new, delighted her. She and Miss Goldie tried to go the wrong way, and had to be assisted by a man who was coming out, and who told them rather shortly, to turn always to the right. Jane wished to try it over again then and there, but Miss Goldie said, "No, indeed." Going out that way was as much as she felt equal to.

The Trust Company, which was on the first floor of the building, was an imposing place, with marble floors and mahogany fittings. Miss Goldie installed Jane on a settee, giving her the umbrella to take care of, and herself

at once entered upon the tedious process of doing the wrong thing. Jane held fast to the umbrella, swung her feet, and gazed about with bright, interested eyes, at the busy clerks behind their little windows, at the men who came and went or stood in groups, until her attention became centered upon a most curious sight, having in it suggestions of a fairy tale.

Directly opposite to her was something which looked like a huge cage and inside was a young man. At the door of this cage, which slid back and forth, stood a negro man in livery who now and then let someone into the cage.

Each time this happened, the young man jumped up, said something to the person entering, and then they both disappeared in a sort of passage into which the cage opened at the back. Jane was sure the Ogre was somewhere at the end of this passage, that this young man was a prisoner, and the people who came in were, perhaps, friends who were trying to induce the Ogre to let him out. When one after another they came away and left him still in the cage, Jane felt sorry. She wished to ask some questions, but she couldn't without leaving her seat, and Miss Goldie had

charged her to sit still and take care of the umbrella.

Then, as it had happened at the giant's tomb so long ago, who should come in but the Princess! She was dressed in gray and looked very handsome. She did not see Jane but walked straight to the cage, the door of which was flung wide for her entrance, the prisoner, bowing deferentially, and then they were lost sight of down the passage into which Jane could not see. It seemed to her they stayed a long time, but they appeared again after a while, and the Princess walked out of the cage and the young man with her. Jane laughed and clapped her hands because he was free.

It chanced to be a quiet moment in the Trust Company, and several persons looked around at her. Lucia exclaimed, "Why, it is Jane, isn't it?" and Jane stood up, letting the umbrella fall with a bang to the floor.

The released prisoner picked it up for her, and Jane said, "I am glad you got out! Did the Ogre put you in the cage?"

The young man was greatly amused, and Lucia said, "What a queer idea!" Where fairy tales and such things are concerned the Wise and Prudent are apt to be a little slow

of comprehension. But in spite of this, there was something in the manner of the Princess today that Jane liked. Perhaps she seemed more human.

A portly gentleman came forth from somewhere to greet Miss King and tell her how well she was looking, and the young man told him about Jane's thinking he was a prisoner, and they all laughed. Some other people joined the group and asked her questions, more or less foolish, and said, "How cunning!" which Jane didn't like, for she was eight and a half now.

This was the state of affairs when Miss Goldie, having transacted her business through much tribulation, came to look for her. Miss Goldie had forgotten to endorse her check, and when she went back to the desk to do it, she dropped her glasses and cracked them. Then she endorsed it upside down, and in her nervous haste smeared the signature so it looked like a "Blottentot." And now how was she ever to get Jane away from those people?

"I'd like to go upstairs and see the Ogre," Jane was saying. Lucia had explained to her very clearly about the vault where valuables were kept, and that the young man who sat in what she called the cage, was the vault keeper,

and waited on people when they came to examine their boxes; and that there wasn't any Ogre. Jane found it highly uninteresting. "There's an Ogre upstairs," she asserted.

The vault keeper said he was pretty certain the Ogre was out today and Jane had better call again.

Disappointed in this, Jane thought of something else. "Where is David?" she demanded.

Lucia looked grave. He had not come home yet, she answered, she hoped he would soon.

"I hope so, too," said Jane. "I wish he was here now. He would take me to see the Ogre."

This mention of the Ogre, it was easy to see, alarmed Miss Goldie. She may have had a guilty conscience, and felt afraid Jane's audience would guess who he was, and that something dreadful would result; so she called Jane very sternly, and Jane, remembering the revolving doors they must go out of, heard and obeyed.

CHAPTER XXV

A CABLEGRAM

"Miss Goldie, please tell me the story about Peter and the fairy, 'cause I do want Angela so much."

"Why, Jane, do you mean St. Peter and the angel?" Miss Goldie looked shocked.

To Jane it was a distinction without a difference. Fairies and angels were much the same except as to size. As for honorary titles, like Roger Penrose she did not think much of them.

There were certain Bible stories she particularly liked, no doubt because Miss Goldie liked them and told them so well. There was the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil that did not fail the widow in time of famine; the prophet's servant whose eyes were opened to see their invisible helpers, and the story of St. Peter's deliverance from prison. Miss Goldie

believed them implicitly. Not in a general way, because they were in the Bible, and the Bible is inspired and, therefore, they must be true—and that was all there was to it; no, Miss Goldie believed that for her, too, there were unseen helpers, just as for the widow, and the servant, and St. Peter.

Needless to say this belief was the result of no logical deductions. Miss Goldie had been helped more than once. She was certain of it, but there had always been the waiting before the help came, and you couldn't quite control your fear. There was a sustaining power in these old stories. Miss Goldie put down her work and took Jane on her lap and repeated the familiar narrative, and Jane said, "Let's pretend the little girl's name was Jane, instead of Rhoda." When, with this alteration, the orthodoxy of which is doubtful, it was brought to the usual conclusion, Jane added, "I am going to ask God to send an angel or a fairy to help us and make Angela well."

Silently Miss Goldie kissed her. It was so strange to them not to have Angela there to laugh at them, to say what must be done, to lean upon and depend on. The sight of the study table in perfect order, with no books

piled high upon it, pens and pencils neatly placed in their tray, struck terror to one's heart. No Angela to say "Jane darling, you are such a nuisance!" or to ask how many thousand buttonholes Miss Goldie had made since breakfast. Ah, the fear that took possession of one for a dreadful moment now and then—the fear that perhaps——!

Fortunately, Miss Goldie had little time to think, for she was at the helm, now they had taken Angela to St. Anne's. They could not tell yet; she was no worse, but very ill. The crisis would not come for some days. That morning the postman had handed in a foreign letter, which Miss Goldie put carefully away in Angela's desk. She was too ill for letters.

You found out now as the news spread, how much was thought of Angela. Susie came over every morning, and talked of Angela's kindness in helping her in her new venture—she and Rose Conway had opened an office for stenography and typing. The people from the Settlement came, and reporters from the paper for which Angela wrote, called regularly, and other inquirers kept the telephone and Miss Goldie busy.

Roger Penrose was as kind as possible, of-

fering to do anything, from ordering coal and paying the gas bill, to amusing Jane.

Cousin John said she had known all along Angela was overworking. She had been burdened with responsibility ever since her childhood.

"Yes," agreed Mrs. Marple, "I've told Angela again and again that there's a limit to everything, even human strength. But then you know how it is yourself. If you've got it to do, you do it, and think you will get through somehow."

"Yes, this is the way it always happens," the Blind Man growled. "I could mention a dozen lazy, good-for-nothings to whom a spell of typhoid would be a benefit, and here it is Angela gets it! Germs, it would seem, love a shining mark as well as——" It must have been the recollection of what it is that loves a shining mark that brought him up so short.

Mrs. Browne came to his relief by embracing the opportunity to refute the germ theory. She stood unabashed before the accumulated results of scientific research, and the whole of the medical profession. She rose nobly to the defense of flies and mosquitoes. Cousin John was incited to reply; the

atmosphere grew warm, and the Blind Man regained his spirits.

As the party broke up, Cousin John remarked that the trouble with Mrs. Browne was she had no sense of humor. The Blind Man, whose ears were sharp, overheard. "A sense of humor," he said sententiously, "is something you never know you haven't got."

At length the crisis passed, but Angela did not rally as the physicians hoped and expected, lying, instead, in utter prostration. Sister Philippa stopped Miss Goldie in the corridor one day as she and Jane came from Cousin John's room. Something must be done to arouse Angela, she said. Had any foreign letters come for her recently? Miss Goldie told her there had.

"Then," said the Sister, "you must open one, find the address and send a cablegram."

Open one of Angela's letters! No wonder Miss Goldie looked aghast.

"It should have been done before," Sister Philippa said, "but it may not be too late," she crossed herself and touched her beads.

"The address," said Miss Goldie, "was on the outside. It was Paris; I forget the rest."

"That will do, if it is the last letter. Send it at once."

"But I don't know the name," Miss Goldie faltered, "and I can't open Angela's letter."

"The name is Richard Waite," said Sister Philippa. "Say 'Angela is ill, come.'"

Miss Goldie naturally knew nothing about cable messages except that they were expensive. In her perplexity she was forced to appeal to the Assistant.

Roger said he would attend to it at once, and Jane might come with him if she liked. Then he put the paper Miss Goldie gave him into his pocket without looking at it. As they were starting they met Susie coming in and Roger asked her to ride down on the car with them.

After they were seated in the car he took out the paper and seemed greatly surprised at it. "I don't understand. This is Dick's name and address! There can't be a mistake. It is Miss Goldie's writing."

"She got it off Angela's letter," Jane explained. "Sister told her to. She wants him to come. I think he is the Kind Man."

All the way down and back Roger and Susie were talking about it. Roger kept repeating, "Dick and Angela! How strange! Why did she never mention it? I wonder where they met? I remember," he went on,

"that once, on a lecture tour, Dick had a bad illness, was in a hospital somewhere for weeks. Could it have been here? It must have been six years ago. And there is *The Cock and the Horse!* I thought it was strangely like him." So they continued to put this and that together.

Suddenly Susie exclaimed, "Oh, Roger, how long does it take to come from Paris?"

"Ten days at least, if he leaves at once. I said, 'Reply,'" he answered gravely, and Susie put her arm around Jane. She and Roger seemed to be very good friends in these days, and found a great deal to talk about. Jane lost the drift of it for a time as she looked out of the car window; when she began again to pay attention, Roger was saying:

"Of course, if it is carried out, it will need a much bigger and more experienced man than I am, but I shall be glad to have had something to do with starting it. Of course, don't say anything about it."

"And proud," Susie added, "you have reason to be." Indeed, she seemed certain he was quite capable of taking charge of this—whatever it was, that she must not tell about.

Roger said "No," and besides he had promised a friend out in the West that he would

join him there in a big mission field which was opening, whenever he was needed. "And I have been wondering," he went on, and then added, "but I will tell you about that another time."

There are those who believe in telepathy, and those who declare there is no such thing, and both sides claim to find their support in science. Still others feel dimly that there are more things in heaven and earth than can be scientifically accounted for, and do not wait for absolute proof, but go forward like those seekers of old, not knowing, but believing. To the adventurous spirit the absence of certainty has its zest, an attitude which to another order of mind must ever remain a puzzle. Some must stand on two feet like the Cock, and say, "Seeing is believing," others, like his buoyant companion, cry as they face the gale, "Believing is seeing."

There are persons, too, like Mrs. Browne, who find no mystery anywhere. "No, my child, there are no ogres or fairies," she told Bernard. "I fear Jane's head is full of nonsense. It is silly to pray for an angel. Angels do not appear on earth now."

Jane, we feel, should have been more reticent, but then Bernard had been repeating

with annoying positiveness something he had heard his grandmother say in regard to Angela, and she was compelled to defend herself.

Whether it was wasted breath, whether it had anything to do with what happened, or whether the result was effected through the working of some law such as those who believe in telepathy claim to perceive, is open to argument, but certain it is that many prayers were being offered up for Angela at this time, although some of them, perhaps, would not be recognized on earth as prayers at all.

How strange that Miss Goldie should be praying for the coming of Jane's mysterious Kind Man, and Sister Philippa, and Roger and Susie; Cousin John, who wasn't sure she believed in prayer, and the Blind Man, who was sure he didn't—all adding their mite to the wave of desire for Angela's welfare that went —somewhere.

And the cable, so it happened, never reached Richard Waite, because at the moment of its sending he was landing in New York, only twenty-four hours away.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE KIND MAN

JANE was playing in the front yard, with many pauses to gaze wistfully across at St. Anne's. The Cock and the Horse pointed due north. The weather was growing cool and she wore her coat and a red tam which matched her cheeks. Standing with her back to the gate she was looking up at the locust tree and thinking about the fairy, when suddenly she was clasped from behind.

"Jane! Jane! Don't you know me?" asked a voice that was half familiar.

Twisting herself about in the arms which held her so close, her indignation turned to joy. "It is the Kind Man," she cried. "You have been such a long time coming. I'm a big girl now."

"So you are, tremendous! Are you glad to see me?"

For answer Jane squeezed his hand and danced up and down. "I asked God to send an angel or a fairy," she said, "but I guess they were busy, and you will do just as well."

Then he got out the burning question, "Where is Angela?"

Jane pointed to St. Anne's. "She's there and she's sick, dreadfully. Bernard says she is going to die. I don't want Angela to die;" hiding her face on his arm.

Angela did not die. If she had, this story could never have been written. No, the tide turned and with her hand in Richard's strong clasp, she came back. Only the doctors and nurses knew how near she had been to slipping over the border. "The Blessed Virgin sent him in time," Sister Philippa said. She and the Kind Man greeted one another like old friends.

Once fairly started on the road to health, each day showed a change for the better, and it was not very long before she was asking, "Where is my Jane?"

Jane instructed to be very, very quiet; just to kiss her hand and come away directly, stole in softly enough, awed by the strangeness of the bare room, and Angela lying so still on the high, narrow bed. But Angela's smile

and her low-voiced, "Jane, darling!" reassured her and unloosed her tongue.

"Bernard said you were going to die, Angela, but you aren't any such thing! The Kind Man said you weren't. Did you know he had come back, Angela? And his name is Mr. Waite—and Miss Goldie——"

Angela laughed, a queer, weak laugh, but genuine, and the nurse came in hastily and gave her something, and Jane was hurried away.

"Jane, how could you? when you promised to be quiet!" exclaimed Miss Goldie, and Jane's feelings were deeply injured.

Great joy is demoralizing; Miss Goldie in these days made buttonholes wrong side out and upside down, and every which way. She liked the Kind Man, she told Jane so, and yet you could see there was something connected with him that kept her from being quite happy. Perhaps it was because he wasn't a publisher after all. Perhaps she was crossing a bridge before she reached it.

Romance will out, perhaps quite as surely as murder. The whole neighborhood, deeply concerned as it had been over Angela's illness, was presently thrilling with it. Cousin John, at first inclined to be offended that she had been kept in the dark—and one cannot blame

her—succumbed to the interest of the situation, and to Richard himself.

"So you're the paragon!—and Angela is a deceitful little minx," she exclaimed when Jane brought him to her sitting-room.

"Then I shall have to begin our friendship by disabusing your mind of two errors," he said laughing. Drawing his chair to her side, he added, "we'll leave the first to take care of itself, and devote ourselves to the second."

With Jane on his knee, he told Cousin John how six years ago, in the dreary days of his convalescence from the sudden, desperate illness that had brought him to St. Anne's, he had watched Angela as she came and went with her invalid father. That was the beginning of the story and it was easy to imagine the rest. If you loved Angela you felt the charm of Richard's manner as he talked of her.

"But there we were, you see," he explained, "tied hand and foot to our separate responsibilities. There was nothing for us but to keep our secret to ourselves. Except for the few weeks that followed our meeting, we have not spent six days together in all the six years."

"Well, I suppose it is all right," said Cousin

John. "I had other ideas for Angela, but no doubt I was mistaken."

If others beside Cousin John have been given the impression that Richard Waite was one of those peerless heroes such as flourished so abundantly in our grandmother's day, it must be corrected. Such a hero demands a villain to offset him, and this story has none to offer. And, remember, Cousin John, who disliked paragons, was won over in a single afternoon.

The Blind Man, while not at all sure he was good enough for Angela, was favorably inclined. He had not met anybody so clever at an argument in a long while. With characteristic candor he had promptly attacked some of the ideas found in *The Cock and the Horse,* the authorship of which could no longer be kept a secret, and the discussion which began in the Hearn library threatened to last forever, if Bernard had not been sent for his grandfather.

"The fellow has some queer notion about the ultimate fate of the universe hanging upon the faithfulness with which you and I play our parts. He calls it an adventure," Mr. Browne told Cousin John.

"I positively decline to have any such re-

sponsibility put on me," said Cousin John. "Nonsense!"

The Assistant's pride in his cousin was pleasant to see. When Dick got the better of the Blind Man in a discussion his glee went beyond bounds. In these days, too, Roger was forever dropping hints of a secret, which concerned the neighborhood; probably the same piece of news Jane had heard him cautioning Susie not to mention. Miss Lucia King, who was out of town for a few weeks, had something to do with it. She wished to consult her brother before her plans were made public. Lucia was wonderfully changed, Roger said, and seemed to look at everything from a new standpoint.

And then, just as everybody was feeling relieved and happy over Angela, on the very night before she came home, in fact, something else happened causing plans to be forgotten.

Jane and Miss Goldie, Richard Waite and Roger, were sitting around the library fire; a most cheerful, crackling fire, which, so Richard told Jane, was saying, now in a whisper, now louder, "Angela's coming!" Then Jane discovered the clock repeating the same words, "Angela's coming! Angela's coming!" and

when she put her ear close to Mufti who was stretched on the rug, he was singing the same song inside his throat.

"By the way, David King is at home," Roger remarked. As he spoke the telephone rang in the hall, and he rose to answer it.

He returned presently, looking grave. "There's been an accident," he said. "A party of young people coming in from the country club in a machine, were run into at the railroad crossing. Several are seriously injured, David King among them. His sister arrives this evening. I wonder who will meet her?"

"And we were just thinking of David," said Miss Goldie. "I hope he isn't badly hurt."

CHAPTER XXVII

MORE ROMANCE

ONE stormy November day Jane sat at Angela's table pasting pictures in her scrap book. Angela and the Kind Man were talking. They were always talking it seemed to Jane. Sometimes she listened, sometimes she didn't.

"Ours is a sort of hospital romance, isn't it?" said Angela. "Dear Sister Philippa, think of her taking matters in her own hands about the cable!"

"Yes, bless her heart! but how glad I am I did not wait for it."

"That foolish letter of mine! I am ashamed of it, Richard. Yet, if I had not written it, you wouldn't have come, and I should have had typhoid fever just the same. The fever I insist was responsible for the letter, and the letter brought you. How mixed things are!"

"It was something more than the letter.

That made me uneasy, still I should not have come but for the strong impression that you needed me, from which I couldn't escape. As to the letter, Angela, I can't understand how anything—even fever, could have made you doubt—— By the way, I must have missed a great many of your letters. I received one of yours and one from Roger nearly ten months after they were written."

"Oh, Richard dear, I didn't doubt you, not for a minute—only you know it was rather rubbed in, what friends you and Miss King were, and how her money would solve all your problems; and I just couldn't see straight, I suppose."

"But Angela, nothing could be more absurd than this talk about Lucia King," he went on. "I admire her and like her, we are excellent friends, but Lucia loves pomp and circumstance. An obscure toiler might serve for a friend, but not——"

Angela laughed. "I should hate to have you fancying people in love with you," she said, and added, "I am glad to have no more secrets."

"Speaking of secrets, I was about to tell you one."

"I'll listen but won't promise to keep it."

"I have just had a statement from the publishers of *The Cock and the Horse;*" Richard put a copyright sheet in Angela's hand.

"Richard!" she cried, "that dear book!"

Jane left her work to see what so pleased Angela and was disappointed.

"Ours is, as you say, a hospital romance. How down I was the day I first caught sight of the weather vanes!" continued Richard.

"But what were they, till you brought your philosophic mind to bear upon them?"

"It was hearing about Jane and her fairies that suggested most of it."

"Me?" asked Jane, much interested.

"My darling Jane! And I have been pitied for being burdened with her," said Angela.

"And you will be pitied for marrying me when you might have married——"

"Richard, Cousin John told you that! But it was nonsense. Dear boy! Have you heard today?"

"Yes, they say he has a chance, but the pity is if he lives he will probably be helpless."

"It breaks my heart, Richard. There is something enchanting about David, isn't there, Jane? To think of him crushed and broken! No, I must not talk of it, but how can I help thinking about him?"

"I went to inquire for him this morning. It is not nearly so pleasant out there as it is at St. Anne's. I saw Lucia a minute. She is hopeful but greatly distressed. She spoke to me of her brother once or twice last summer. I think she was feeling then that she had not been altogether wise or kind in her attitude towards David. Now you can imagine she is feeling doubly so," said Richard.

"She always appears so cold and conventional," Angela remarked.

"Yes, she is conventional, and the problem of dealing conscientiously—for I believe she is conscientious—with such a lot of money, was too much for her. Simply handing it out didn't work, and then the question of the church property came up and she and David disagreed over that. Oh, you would be sorry for her, Angela, if you really knew her."

"I want to see David. Can I, Angela?" asked Jane.

"He is too ill now, my darling; perhaps after a while. Why not make a scrap book to amuse him when he is better?"

With this new incentive, Jane returned to her work happily, giving no further heed to the conversation until, some time later, Mrs. Marple came in.

"Well, if this isn't the worst day!" she exclaimed. "I hope I'm not intruding. I just stopped by to see how you are getting on, Angela. Oh, yes, I met Mr. Waite with Mr. Penrose the other day. I declare, I believe it is becoming to you to be sick, Angela. You are as pretty as a picture. Goodness! but we were worried about you."

Mrs. Marple's talk rippled on some minutes before she arrived at the real point towards which she had been aiming from the start. "I came over as much as anything, to tell you about Percy," she said, "you haven't heard?"

"Is she going to marry Mr. Samm at last?" Angela asked.

"Well, not exactly. That is, it isn't Mr. Samm. No, it is Mr. Cumnock, who was here in September. I guess I told you about the pie Percy made and he liked so much? Well, he asked her for the recipe, and she told him she hadn't any, but just made it up out of her head. Then he said, joking, that he guessed he'd have to have the cook. Percy laughed and said she'd ask mighty good pay, and he said they wouldn't quarrel about that.

"Well, a few weeks after he went home, here came an express package for Percy, and

I want you to see the fan that was in it! Real lace and pearl sticks! Percy priced one down town and it was fifty dollars, if you'll believe it! I knew then either that man was a fool, or he had money to burn, as they say. Well, the long and short of it is he was here again last week and they are going to be married the first of the month. He says she can get her clothes afterwards. I can tell you I never expected to be related to anything like a millionare, but that's what they say he is. He wants to take Percy to Europe, but she says she'd rather go home and make friends with the children—there are five boys. That tickled Mr. Cumnock, you better believe." Mrs. Marple paused for breath.

"Why! the palmist's prediction came true, didn't it?" said Angela. "Miss Percy will believe in palmistry more than ever."

"I don't know; Percy surprises me, she is getting real serious. She's always been one to take things lightly, and she always said she'd marry money if she had a chance; but now she declares she wishes he hadn't a cent in the world. I guess she don't mean it, really, but she is what you might call humble about it. To tell the truth, I believe she's just plain in love."

"And Mr. Samm—how does he stand it?" Angela asked.

"Well, don't you know, Mr. Samm was in a way prepared, the thing has come on gradually, you might say. It used to worry me to think what would happen if Percy discarded him, but mercy goodness! what is the use worrying about people? You'd a heap better mind your own business and save the wear and tear. Miss Lura Converse has been very attentive lately." Mrs. Marple stopped to laugh. "Lura is a nice girl, and he'll be fortunate to get her."

All of this goes to prove that, to borrow from another proverb, romances seldom come singly.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN THE HEART OF THINGS

THE incidents related in this story occurred some years ago. In fact, incredible as it may seem, Jane is now in college. All that comes in between; David's slow recovery; the dawning hope that through the skill of the great surgeon he would some day walk again; Lucia's devotion, the friendship of Jane and the Kind Man; all these mingled as they are with the plans which began at his bedside to grow and expand, would make another book, but must, instead, be boiled down into a single chapter.

To begin with, the way in which Lucia met and defied the Ogre should be mentioned. By the way, Jane long since learned the Ogre's identity, though, strange to say he himself has never discovered it. As Angela once remarked, "How can you know you are an ogre

if you don't believe in ogres?" Anyway, it takes great clearness of vision to see yourself. The Kind Man says you usually have to put on glasses before you can achieve it, and even then are likely to fail.

The conversation which follows was overheard by David from his invalid's chair outside the open window of the room where his sister and Peyton Randall were talking.

"I must own, my dear Lucia, it pains me to see you throwing money away in this absurd fashion," said the Ogre. "It will not do any good and you will not get any thanks for it."

"Although I couldn't see her, I know how she looked at him," said David, relating it—"with that new expression she has acquired in the defense of our castles."

"Perhaps you are right," she answered, "but it isn't thanks I wish for. I am doing it for fun."

Throwing away half a million dollars, more or less, for fun! No wonder the Ogre was silenced for the moment. Had Lucia wished to buy a yacht or build a palace, it would have seemed to him not unreasonable. Whether you had any fun or not, you'd have the yacht and the palace, something tangible which could be turned into money again, and

you would be doing what other wise and prudent persons did. But the idea of throwing away money for fun must have seemed to him almost indecent. If he had read *The Cock and the Horse,* it might have been clearer to him.

"Of course," he said, "I am not alluding to the church. While it is not the sort of thing I should care for myself, I can understand it, but—— However, the money is yours."

"Yes," said Lucia.

Peyton Randall, it must be owned, had the sense to see when it was of no use. Lucia was very handsome and her fortune would have suited him perfectly, but, he would naturally ask, might she not sacrifice him on the altar of fun? The gods forbid! He went away regretful you may be sure, but thankful to have escaped.

On the occasion of a farewell call by Dr. Brewer and his wife upon Mrs. Clay, Mrs. Brewer deplored the change in Lucia King, who, she felt, had come under some unfortunate influence. She would never cease to regret Peyton Randall's absence at a critical moment. "I shall always be fond of Lucia, but I say to you what I would not say to everyone, that I am disappointed in her. If the Doctor

and I had not been away so long that winter—— Lucia used to turn to us for counsel. Charles, I know, agrees with me that from being an extremely practical person she has become almost visionary."

"Visionary is perhaps too strong a word," Dr. Brewer replied, and he added, somewhat sadly it seemed to Cousin John, that it was a happy thing to have the courage of your visions.

This was soon after his resignation from the Kenton Place Church, which already had its eye upon a brilliant young man who was making a reputation in an eastern pulpit. Dr. Brewer had not been himself since his illness, it was generally remarked.

But what was it that caused Lucia's early friends and advisers thus to wash their hands of her? If you go back to Sycamore Street now, you at once begin to understand, and it is possible you may agree with the Ogre and Mrs. Brewer. Like most things in this human life of ours it is a venture, but this is at least a happy one.

The church still stands on the corner, changed indeed, but recognizable by its Corinthian pillars and deep porch, around which the ivy still grows. Back of it rises the Mission

House, equipped with all the modern appliances for social work. It is even more perfect than the castle Roger Penrose once built in the days when he was beginning his mission school in a cottage on North Street.

It did not, as you may be sure, spring up in a night, but is the result of careful planning and wise insight into the needs of the neighborhood.

Thus far it has gone hand in hand with the Settlement. In spite of the prophets who said one must fail, both have prospered. The school is liberally endowed, the church services are provided for by unsolicited contributions. It is known as the House of Prayer, from the words on the corner stone, "My house shall be called a house of prayer," and the incident which inspired Jane Porterfield's gift so long ago.

The door is always open and you are free to enter at any time for rest or prayer or both. Many a man from the Business World may be seen dropping in at the noon service, held daily, for the word of encouragement and inspiration he is sure to hear.

Here gather at intervals persons interested in what may be called, for lack of a better term, the psychology of prayer, to discuss

broadly and reverently the possibility of coming in touch with the Unseen.

The interior of the House of Prayer is simple and beautiful. The windows are all memorials, and among them Jane's angel so long hid away in the garret, looks gravely down. To this day she is only half convinced that it was not a real angel she saw that morning. There is a new one to Jane's mother, and Lucia has given one in her father's memory, but refuses to have their name associated in any other way with the church. It belongs to God, she says, for that her father's last words referred not to the new but to the old church she has long been convinced.

The thing of all others that most annoyed the Ogre, and was the occasion of his earnest expostulations, was this. He owned a piece of property on North Street diagonally across from the old church; a tumble down house in the middle of a lot occupying almost a whole block. He had acquired it originally in the hope that it mght be chosen as a site for the new armory. Disappointed in this, when Lucia appeared as a purchaser, he had let her have it for about what he gave for it.

In the past Miss Goldie had built many a castle here. If she were rich, she said, she

would buy it and make a park and a play ground, where you could rest a while and see the sky. Jane must have told David about it, and it is easy to imagine the fun they had over it when Lucia decided to make Miss Goldie's dream come true.

Now, you can make a short cut, see the sky, and if you wish to, rest awhile. There is the shelter house with a tiled roof, and gravel walks, and grass and flowers, and a few fine old trees, which will last till the young ones come on. This has been given to the city, and is known as Porterfield Square.

When once you begin to do things for fun it would seem there is no end to it. There might, of course, be an end to the money, but curiously enough, while the investments mentioned give no returns in money, other ventures of Lucia's are successful enough to satisfy even an Ogre. Porterfield Square, for instance, has increased the value of her property in the neighborhood. As he has been mentioned, perhaps it would be as well to finish the Ogre once for all. As soon as he had recovered sufficiently from the shock of Lucia's folly, he married a wealthy widow and now lives in what was once known as the Kings' palace in

Kenton Place. He seems content and smiles pityingly when Lucia is mentioned.

There were no happy memories to hold Lucia and David to the home in Kenton Place, and, moreover, as her plans for the old church grew, Lucia began to discover what the world has been finding out for some years past, that arm's length benefactions are of doubtful value. Then old Alexander McKenzie died and left his library to David, to whom he was much attached, and Lucia, remembering her brother had once expressed a wish to live in an old house down in the heart of things, suggested buying the McKenzie place. The library would not then need to be disturbed, and it was really a beautiful old house, if it were once cleaned and put in order.

David, by this time beginning to be himself again, hailed the idea with acclaim.

Thus an oasis in the very heart of a busy town, grew and spread. An old neighborhood was preserved, a number of fine old homes restored, for Miss King, having set the example, others were quick to discover how pleasant it was to be in the heart of things for six months or so of the year. One or two of the University professors found the neigh-

borhood convenient, and a little community of workers of one sort and another, teachers, writers, artists, presently came into being. And most of them, it must be said, gave their support in one way or another to the House of Prayer and the mission.

Lucia has not thus far built her apartment house. Instead, she and David bought a block of dreary houses, built fifty years ago and now overlooking Porterfield Square, and gave it to a clever young architect to remodel. He proved himself possessed of imagination of the right sort. The result surprised everybody. With all the good points preserved, the down-at-the-heel tenements have blossomed like the rose, and have become a row of charming, picturesque homes, of moderate rent and pleasant outlook, and so convenient to the Business World, carfare has scarcely to be considered.

Lucia owns it is an experiment, but so far a success. Some say that as the tide of business enterprise rises higher, it must yet engulf the neighborhood. Perhaps, and perhaps not. At least Porterfield Square will remain and the House of Prayer. But it is a mistake to be too much concerned for the future. According to Jane, the thing to do is to make

a place for the fairies now, and they'll do the rest.

Lucia is no longer bored. You aren't when you are doing things for fun. People have been heard to wonder why she hasn't married, and to hint about something tragic in her life, but she goes on her busy, useful, happy way and nobody really knows.

David is well on the way to become a famous playwright, since his dramatization of *The Cock and the Horse* took the theater-going world by storm. He has a new play almost finished, and to a foolish reporter who asked him the secret of the peculiar, whimsical charm that pervaded all his recent work, he replied that it lay "simply in taking an everyday incident and translating it into Janese." The interviewer, not knowing Jane, went away puzzled.

David limps slightly and walks with a cane, but this is a small matter when you meet the steady, purposeful glance of his dark eyes, which are still as merry as of old.

Captain McKenzie would not know his old home, Lucia has made such a beautiful place of it, while carefully preserving its character. It is the center of a delightful social life, and though Lucia may, perhaps, find some of her

brother's friends queer, she does not frown upon them. She must always be somewhat aloof, but it is no longer that aloofness which springs from a feeling of superiority. While Kenton Place has dubbed her erratic, it is still eager to be bidden to her social gatherings.

Already more than one helpful civic movement has had its beginning in Lucia's drawing-room, for she lets it be known she is there to be of use, and her genuine talent for affairs has every opportunity to develop now.

Angela and Richard live in the house next the church, and, of course, have a share in all the neighborhood doings. Richard has a chair in the University, and writes a great deal, but no more fiction. *The Cock and the Horse* is his one story, he says. Angela, however, has published a small book which she calls, "As Told to Jane," being a collection of going-to-bed stories.

Miss Goldie lives with them, that is, when she isn't at the shop. This is one of Lucia's many schemes, and is a place where you can buy or order all kinds of fine hand work. Miss Goldie oversees the needle-work department, and is very busy and important, and is laying by something. The thought of the Ogre no longer makes her unhappy.

Naturally, there is much friendly intercourse between the Kings and the Waites, particularly when Jane is at home. People have gone on saying, "Oh, yes, she's very attractive, but wait till she is a little older!" Jane has gone on getting a little older each year, and still is the same Jane to those who love her. Perhaps it is because she still believes in fairies and likes to go visiting once a year with Miss Goldie, who, in spite of having so many friends in the land of the living now, does not forget the others, but continues to make the rounds, paying her gentle tribute.

David, who is considered a master of the happy phrase, declares Jane to be most baffling when it comes to a description. You may juggle feebly with "rose leaf cheek, starry glance, the witchery of her smile, her maiden grace," but you return at length with a sigh, to "Just Jane."

Which is much nicer than being categorized in an exaggerated manner, Jane assures him.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CURTAIN FALLS

WHEN Jane comes home for a holiday it is the signal for a gathering of the Kind Red Spirits as David calls them. Not long ago at Christmas time when Susie and Roger were visiting their friends in Sycamore Street, Angela gave a dinner party in memory of old days.

Nobody, of course, is surprised to hear that Susie went with the Assistant to his field in the West. He must have been thinking about asking her the evening he sent the cablegram, when he said he would tell her about something another time.

It was at this dinner that the discussion arose over the date of Roger's first appearance in the neighborhood, and Susie so indignantly denied having called him a round-faced young man. Susie is, by the way, a charm-

ing young matron, very proud of her husband, and the little boy they have left at his grandmother's.

Jane recalled the red cushions on the doorstep, and how she couldn't help smiling at the reference to Goldilocks; and Angela exclaimed, "What a memory you have, Jane darling!"

Mrs. Marple was there in a new black silk, which, she informed everybody, Percy had sent her, with the money to have it made. It was a picture to see her and Lucia sitting on the same sofa in friendly converse. Things have become easier for Mrs. Marple. She keeps house for her son, who, since this story began, has reformed, married and become a widower with two children.

Mrs. Marple had much to tell Susie of the wonders of Percy's establishment, and this, of course, suggested Mr. Samm, who, it seemed, was also living in great prosperity, in a suburban home.

"I declare, it does your heart good to see him varnishing round," Mrs. Marple exclaimed. "Lura says varnish is his one extravagant habit, and I tell her it might be a heap worse. He might chew."

Then, naturally, Susie had to tell about lit-

tle Roger, and Lucia said his picture was dear, and Susie must be sure to bring him when they came to spend the promised week with her.

Among the guests was the Blind Man, and there is no harm in saying that nobody was unhappy because Mrs. Browne chanced to be out of town. The Blind Man's sight has been, in a measure, restored, though he still says, "I can't see." He sometimes stops in at the House of Prayer; he likes the effect of the afternoon sun on the angel window, he says. We may hope he has apologized for that criticism of Providence once made to Cousin John in connection with Jane Porterfield's gift.

Has anyone missed Cousin John? The Blind Man does. There are so few left to call him Alpheus. Cousin John died quietly in her sleep some years ago, before her sight was quite gone. It turned out she had only a life interest in her husband's estate but her own fortune, which was not large, she left to Angela with the exception of a number of small bequests to the friends who had been so kind to her during her stay at St. Anne's—Susie, Roger, Mrs. Marple and all. Cousin John must have had some fun making that will, and

perhaps, if people do have fun in the beyond, and why shouldn't they?—but as the Wise and Prudent say, this is going too far.

They talked of many things that evening, but chiefly of such as the old days suggested, and, most characteristically, the Blind Man tried to inveigle Roger into an argument about prayer.

"Suppose you ask for one thing and I for the opposite—say you want fair weather and I ask for rain—whose prayer is going to be heard?"

Roger laughed and shook his head.

"I guess," said Mrs. Marple, "it isn't always getting what you ask for, but what you really want. Some of us don't know our own minds two days at a time. It takes the Lord to understand us."

"You can't argue about it," said Roger.

"No," added Richard, "if there is anything in it at all, it is far more subtle, transcending human words and human logic."

"But if you can go to God as a father and get His help, would it not seem a great pity to miss it, through not seeing how?" Roger suggested.

Then somebody changed the subject with a question about David's new play.

"What do you call it, David?" Angela asked.

"'The Owl and the Ogre,'" he replied gravely.

"David, what fun!" cried Jane, "and is it really just as we planned it?"

He nodded, and Miss Goldie, who is on the way to become a delightfully plump old lady, moved her chair nearer.

"Yes, the scene is laid from beginning to end in an office building."

"The Trust Building!" Jane exclaimed.

"Perhaps; however, you had better keep that to yourself, Jane Porterfield, or we may be sued for libel one of these days," David admonished her. "In the last scene," he continued, "the fairies and the Kind Red Spirits bind the Ogre and put him in the dungeon."

"David, how absurd," said Lucia, laughing, nevertheless, for she has come to be at home in the Land of What-You-Please.

"Delicious!" cried Jane, clapping her hands.

And now to make use of the metaphor suggested, the curtain falls on the friends in Sycamore Street, with Jane and David laughing in the foreground.